

Raccoon Creek News

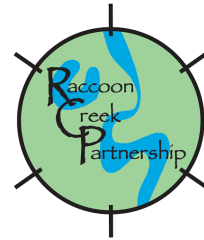
Fall 2017

FALL in Love with Raccoon Creek

2017 Annual Dinner—Board Members Needed!

The Raccoon Creek Partnership 2017 Annual Dinner... aka... the best potluck of the year, is a great opportunity to find out what is new in Raccoon Creek and how you can get involved in the restoration, conservation, and stewardship of the creek.

When: Sunday, November 5th, 4:00pm
Where: New Marshfield (Waterloo) Community Center
Located in New Marshfield, across from the post office
What: Family style potluck, so please bring a dish to share
More Fun: Silent auction and 50/50 raffle!



RCP has experienced recent board vacancies and 6 of the 7 board positions are up for re-election or 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 Molly Gurien at paddlemerlot@yahoo.com by OCTOBER 1st.

Raccoon Creek Partnership - Current Board of Directors

Molly Gurien (Chair), Heike Perko (Vice-Chair), Jessica Makosky (Treasurer),

Bob Eichenberg (Secretary), Vance Rannells, Glenn Stout, Vacant

Fall Float & National Public Lands Day

Raccoon Creek Partnership is pleased to join with other regional organizations in what is to be the inaugural Appalachian Ohio National Public Lands Day as part of the larger National Public Lands Day initiative. Public Lands Day activities promote an understanding and appreciation for public lands and waterways through stewardship and recreation. Join the Raccoon Creek Partnership on September 30th for a canoe/kayak float on Raccoon Creek in Gallia County as we celebrate and appreciate our local rivers. This event will highlight outdoor recreation, public access, water safety and environmental stewardship of a local waterway. Registration is required. Canoes and kayaks are available by reservation. This event is free and open to the public. Details on exact time and meeting location will be posted on our Facebook page. **Contact Molly Gurien (740-707-6655, paddlemerlot@yahoo.com) for more information and to register for the event.**



Want to help Raccoon Creek? Register your Kroger Plus Card!

Sign up Today by Following These 5 Easy Steps:

1. Go to: www.krogercommunityrewards.com - Click "Sign in" or "Create an account" at the top of the screen.
2. To Create an account: simply fill in the requested information and a confirmation email will be sent to you.
3. Click on the link provided in the email from Kroger, and "Sign in".
4. Once signed in click on the "Edit Community Rewards Information" near the bottom of the screen. Then, in the "Find Your Organization" field, type in "Raccoon Creek Partnership". Select us and Save your Selection.
5. Swipe your Kroger Rewards Card every time you shop and help RCP grow!

ATHENS

GALLIA

HOCKING

JACKSON

MEIGS

VINTON

The Magic of Luna Moths - *Kaylin Callander, Lake Hope State Park Naturalist*

Many of our species of native butterflies are highly colorful but did you know there are some species of moths that are colorful too? One of them is the Luna Moth (*Actias luna L.*), which is very easy to identify by its sea foam green wings and long swallow-like tails. Luna moths are members of the Order *Lepidoptera*, which means "scaled wings". Often these scales, if touched, will fall off producing a dusty like substance on whatever they touched. Once they lose the scales it is hard for them to fly, as they will not regrow. Its larvae, called caterpillars, are bright lime green with a pale yellow lateral band upon each side. These caterpillars molt through about 5 instars. Each molted instar lasts about 5 days. The caterpillars can get 2½-3 inches long. The entire larval stage lasts about 3½-4 weeks. The larvae are voracious eaters! Their diet consists of the leaves of many kinds of trees including American Beeches, Hickories, Maples, Oaks, and Walnuts.



Come visit the nature center at Lake Hope State Park to see some of these luna moth caterpillars munching away or the cocoons that they have spun and will reside in until next spring.

New Canoe Livery on Raccoon Creek! - *Bobbi Hoy, Raccoon Creek Outfitters*

We at Raccoon Creek Outfitters know the importance of adding a little bit of fun in one's life. Our family opened the canoe livery in hopes that people would get outside and play. We had no idea of the support we would receive from the community. We purchased the land and buildings in December of 2016 with a goal of being open by April 15, 2017. With our friends and family by our side, we trudged through high water, mud, weeds debris & trash; we met our goal. This season has brought in many friends, family and new faces. We would never have made it as far as we did without Raccoon Creek Partnership. They have worked many years and countless hours cleaning our creek, ridding it of acid mine drainage, removing debris, and so much more. Their hard work paved the way for us to live out our dream.



Our thirty acres have a lot to offer, along with canoe and kayak rentals, ten walk-in primitive campsites and one site that the camper must paddle to. We also have a slackline, shelter house, large recreational firepit, stage for live bands, room for reunions, and large groups and even weddings. **If you would like more information, please visit our website at www.raccooncreekoutfitters.com and follow us on Facebook.**

RCP UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Monthly RCP Meetings are held the Last Wednesday of every month at 6:30 PM at WAEC or Ohio University

Contact Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) for more information or to register for their events

RCP Monthly Meeting_____	September 27th
Vinton SWCD Annual Meeting_____	September 28th
RCP Water Trail Association Fall Canoe Float_____	September 30th
Meigs SWCD Annual Meeting _____	October 3rd
Athens SWCD Annual Meeting _____	October 19th
Jackson SWCD Annual Meeting _____	October 19th
Lake Hope Fall Hike & Midnight in Moonville_____	October 21st
RCP Monthly Meeting _____	October 25th
ROAR @ Lake Hope State Park _____	October 28th
Hocking SWCD Annual Meeting _____	November 5th
Raccoon Creek Partnership Annual Dinner _____	November 5th
Gallia SWCD Annual Meeting _____	November 9th

"Like" us on Facebook!

To find RCP on Facebook, type "Raccoon Creek Partnership" in the search box and "Like" on our page!

Bear Populations of Ohio and North America

Wyatt E. Snodgrass, University of Rio Grande Student

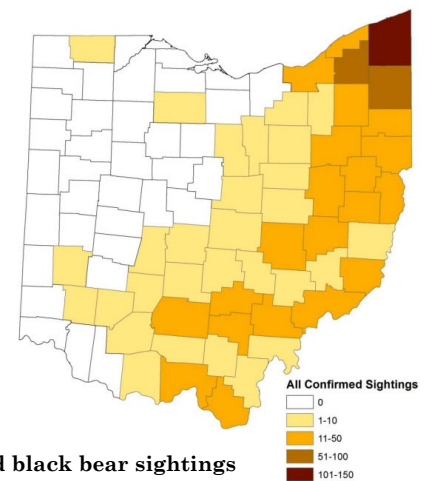
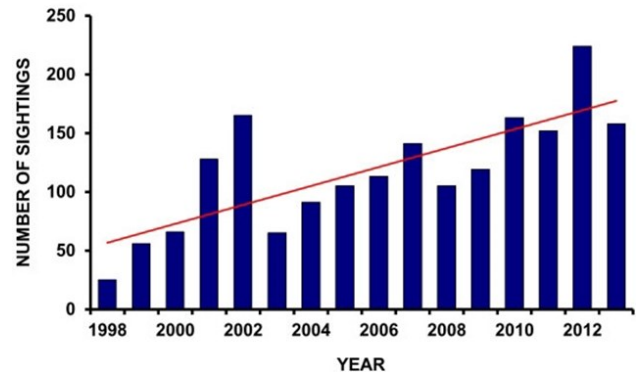
North America is home to three species of bears, brown bear or grizzly (*Ursus arctos*), polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) and American black bears (*Ursus americanus*). Brown bears are sometimes referred to as Kodiak or grizzly bears depending on their geographic location. The name Grizzly comes from their "grizzled" appearance. The species is found mainly amongst inland states and territories within their range.

Polar bears are the largest of the three species and live in the Arctic habitats of the northern regions of North America, Russia, Norway and Greenland. They rely mostly on a carnivorous diet, unlike the other two species of bears that are omnivores and consume mainly plants, berries, nuts, grasses and insects. Polar bears are the most recent bear species to emerge. Through genetic research, biologists have confirmed that polar bears evolved from brown (grizzly) bears around 300,000 years ago (Cronin et al. 1991). The species is protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act and is listed as "threatened" according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Populations are declining due to reduction in their habitat caused by melting sea ice; caused by our planets continually increasing temperatures.

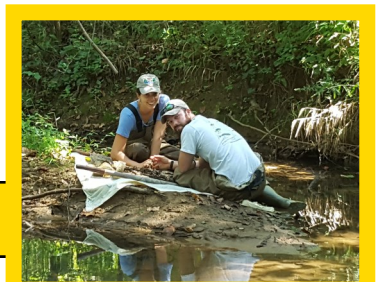
Black bears can have several different variations in color from brown to white. They are the most common species of bear in North America and can be found throughout Canada and in thirty-two of the United States, including parts of Ohio. At one time black bears were very common across the state of Ohio. The population started to decline in the 1800's because of extensive habitat loss due to deforestation, human settlement and unregulated hunting. The species was extirpated from the state by 1850. Today, some habitat is being restored and a small but increasing population of 50 to 100 individual bears have found their way back to Ohio (Figure 1 & 2).

The best places to find black bears in Ohio is in the forested regions throughout the eastern half of the state. If you are lucky enough to see a bear in the wild, remember that you have no reason to be afraid of it, as long as you are respectful to the animal and keep your distance. Report your sighting to the county wildlife officer or wildlife biologist. You can also call 1-800-WILDLIFE to make your report directly to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Number Black Bear Sightings, 2000-2013



Confirmed black bear sightings in Ohio by count, 1993-2013. (Ohio Division of Wildlife)



Farewell Chad & Kara!

I don't even know where to begin to explain how wonderful my experience has been working with Raccoon Creek Partnership this past year. I gained an extensive amount of experience in grant writing, macroinvertebrate sampling, water chemistry sampling, stress management, and most importantly, how to respond with "reply all" to my emails. Working with all of you has truly been a special experience that I will never forget and I hope to see the great work the partnership does continue to grow and expand. I would like to send my sincerest thank you to Amy and Sarah for being great mentors and even better friends. No matter where my life's journey will take me I will always hold a place in my heart for southeastern Ohio and the people I have met over the past year. Again, thank you!! - **Chad Gatt**

It's such a typical thing to say, but this past year went so fast! It's hard to adequately express my gratitude for my experiences throughout the year in just a few sentences. Coming into the position, I aimed to learn more about aquatic wildlife and non-profit environmental work and organization. This position most definitely left me with infinitely more knowledge and experience in those fields. I've been reminded of my appreciation for aquatic creatures and watershed protection in a big way. I'm also so grateful to have worked with and met the people I did, both our daily crew and those we worked with throughout the term. I hope to continue to be around to help out--I'm not so good at goodbyes! Thank you to all who have played a role in my AmeriCorps term! - **Kara Roberts**

Welcome New AmeriCorps Members!

Hi. My name is Abby Costilow, and I happy to be a new AmeriCorps member. My educational background is in education from Kent State University and wildlife resource management from Hocking College. I have volunteered, interned, and worked in the environmental field at such organizations as the Wayne National Forest, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Ohio EPA, and the USDA. I am excited to be serving the Athens area with its rich culture and its wonderful people. I look forward to a year full of meaningful projects that will benefit the natural world and the people who enjoy it. - **Abby**



Hi! My name is Emily Keil-Loudner and I am super excited to work with the Raccoon Creek Partnership this coming year! I am going on my 7th year living in the Athens/Nelsonville area. I completed my Bachelor's degree at Ohio University and decided to do my Master's Degree there as well. For my Master's degree, I had the opportunity to work in several of the local watersheds and meet so many wonderful people! I discovered my passion working in streams and working with the local groups! I am super honored to be working with Raccoon Creek Partnership and look forward to what this year will bring! - **Emily**



Low-head Dams in the Raccoon Creek Watershed

Brooke Stokes, Ohio University Voinovich School Masters of Environmental Studies Candidate

So what is a low-head dam?

While there is no general definition of a "low-head dam", most agree that it is a man-made structure used to hold back water that is between 3-15 meters. There are an estimated 2 million low-head dams and artificial barriers across the United States and we have at least five within the Raccoon Creek Watershed. These barriers impact stream habitat, fish passage, and human safety.

Low-head dam impacts on habitat

When a barrier like a low-head dam is introduced into a river it will change the way the water moves around it. Unlike many natural barriers, low-head dams provide no in-stream habitat for fish and bugs. They break up stream habitats necessary for these creatures to thrive.

Low-head dam impacts on fish

During much of the year, low-head dams are visible at the surface of the water at which time, fish cannot move from downstream of the dam to areas upstream. Many studies have shown that the number of fish species and the total number of fish upstream of low-head dams is significantly lower than those downstream. Although there have been incredible improvements to the water quality in the Raccoon Creek Watershed, the area is still recovering. Many areas across the country are removing low-head dams to increase natural migration of native fish species and increase the diversity of fish within watersheds.

Low-head dam impacts on safety

The most important point to emphasize about low-head dams are the threat they pose to human life. On the surface these dams may seem too small to be dangerous, however there is a reason these structures have been referred to as "drowning machines". Immediately downstream of the dam is a hydraulic jump that is created by the water falling over the dam re-circulating. Anything caught in this current (an object, pet, child, etc.) can drown. Even strong swimmers cannot easily escape this current.

What can you do?

Familiarize yourself with your watershed. Before going out, ensure you are aware of the dangers associated with the area to which you are going.

Respect your watershed. Rivers and streams can be dangerous after a heavy rain. If the water is high, consider rescheduling your activity. Always wear a life jacket when paddling and be cautious when fishing.

Educate yourself on low-head dams and other dangers.

For more information on low-head dam safety you can visit <http://watercraft.ohiodnr.gov/lowheaddams>.



Travel back in time to 1938

2,711 Mine Openings Sealed By WPA In Perry County

By sealing 2711 openings of abandoned mines in Perry County and 27,531 over the state, WPA workers have reduced sulphuric acid pollution of Ohio streams by 55 per cent, Carl Watson, state WPA administrator, announced today.

The sulphuric acid has been poisoning wells and springs, killing fish and vegetation, corroding dams and steel boats and skyrocketing the cost of filtration.

This conservation project is being carried on in this county and 23 other eastern and southeastern Ohio counties by 1000 WPA workers under the technical supervision of B. F. Katch of the State Health Department.

Aiding Country

By sealing these 27,531 openings in 1425 abandoned mines, the WPA workers are helping this county and the state to realize the slogan, "Civilized Streams for Civilized Communities," Administrator Watson pointed out.

This project to end "acid mouth" of abandoned coal mines and to put Ohio Streams on the alkaline side is sponsored by the Ohio State Health Department and the U. S. Public Health Service.

The work has recently been completed in Meigs, Mahoning, Morgan and Carroll Counties. The project is now operating in these counties: Athens, Belmont, Gallia, Guernsey, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Vinson, Washington, Columbiana, Coshocton, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson,

Stark, Tuscarawas and Scioto.

"Acid mouth" is caused by surface water draining through deserted coal mines and reacting with the pyrites in the coal and the oxygen in the air to form sulphuric acid.

Sealing all the openings in the mines shuts off the oxygen supply prevents oxidation.

90 Per Cent Closed

About 90 per cent of the openings are closed up entirely. Ten per cent are sealed by the construction of a brick and concrete trap which operates on the same principle as the trap in a kitchen sink — permitting the water to flow out but excluding the oxygen.

As the result of this 55 per cent reduction of "acid mouth" of Ohio coal mines, the copper color of various streams has been clearing up as the water changed from sour to sweet, fish have been coming back into the streams, farmers have been able to water their cattle again, wells and springs have become fit for use.

Most notorious case of "acid mouth" in Ohio was the abandoned Mine No. 8 at Corning, Ohio, which was emptying 7560 pounds of acid per day into Sunday Creek. Sealing has reduced this about 90 per cent up to date.

This stream pollution problem has been particularly vexing in southeastern Ohio where the federal government has taken over large areas for national forest to furnish good fishing, hunting and camping to the citizens.



Rain to River Program

Rain to River, a program of Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs, recently acquired six storm drain stenciling kits which are available to borrow free of charge with no deposit required. The program targets the Appalachian region of the Ohio River Watershed and provides an opportunity for community groups, students, neighborhood and business associations, church groups and concerned citizens to help educate their communities about storm water pollution.

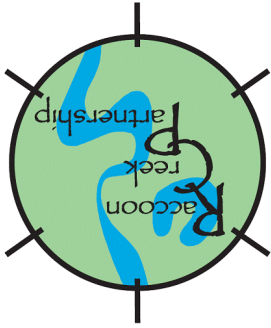
If your community is interested in the storm drain stenciling program contact Sarah Cornwell at 740-593-9601 or Landerss@ohio.edu

Funding for the Rain to River Program comes from an Ohio EPA Environmental Education Fund Grant and is also supported in part through Ohio EPA's Section 319 Clean Water Act Grant Program.

AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Just shop on Amazon Smile and 0.5% of your eligible purchase price goes to RCP.

Just go to: <https://smile.amazon.com> and enter Raccoon Creek Partnership as your charitable organization. Then remember to go to smile.amazon.com next time you shop on Amazon! It doesn't cost you anything, and it helps to support the Raccoon Creek Partnership!





Place
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Send To:

Raccoon Creek Partnership
c/o Amy Mackey
Voinovich School
The Ridges, Bldg 22
Athens, OH 45701

RCP Membership Application

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

Individual Membership

<input type="checkbox"/>	Striped Shiner	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fantail Darter	\$30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Longear Sunfish	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Golden Redhorse	\$500

Organizational Membership

<input type="checkbox"/>	Grass Pickerel	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spotted Bass	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flathead Catfish	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paddlefish	\$1000

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

Name
Address
Phone
E-mail

Your contributions are tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to the:

Raccoon Creek Partnership

and send to:

Raccoon Creek Partnership
Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs
c/o Amy Mackey
The Ridges, Building 22 Athens, Ohio 45701