

Spring Nature Safari Speakers 2025

Warblers of Shawnee State Forest, Jim McCormac (Friday Evening)

Shawnee State Forest and the adjoining Edge of Appalachia Preserve comprise nearly 90,000 contiguous acres. This is the largest tract of wildlands in Ohio and is legendary for its exceptional biodiversity. Warblers are a particularly showy part of the avian diversity, and 18 species breed here. Perhaps especially notable among their ranks are Cerulean Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Worm-eating Warbler. The first two species' populations have plummeted dramatically, but virtually warbler species have declined. Most warblers are not generalists but are typically tightly wedded to certain plant species or specialized habitats. This program will be a pictorial look at the warblers of Shawnee/The Edge and what make them tick.

Jim McCormac worked for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for 31 years as a botanist, and later specializing in wildlife diversity projects, especially involving birds. He has authored or coauthored six books, including *Birds of Ohio* (Lone Pine 2004); and *Wild Ohio: The Best of Our Natural Heritage* (Kent State University Press 2009). The latter won the 2010 Ohioana Book award. He is a coauthor of the *Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II* book. His latest book, coauthored with Chelsea Gottfried, is *Gardening for Moths* (Ohio University Press 2023). Jim writes a column, *Nature*, for the *Columbus Dispatch*, and regularly publishes a natural history blog. He has written numerous articles in a variety of publications and has delivered hundreds of presentations throughout the eastern United States. He was named 2015 Conservation Communicator of the Year by the Ohio League of Sportsmen. Jim is an avid photographer, shooting a range of natural history subjects. He has had hundreds of photos published in various forums. His photography can be sampled at <https://www.jimmccormac.com>

Bobcat: The Return of a Native Ohio Wild Cat, Dr. Shauna Weyrauch (Saturday Evening)

Bobcats are elusive, charismatic, and ecologically important carnivores. Habitat loss and over-harvesting lead to their extirpation from Ohio by the mid-1800s, but in recent years, they have mounted a comeback. Beginning in 2015, Project Wild Coshocton (a research team at The Ohio State University Newark) began documenting the distribution of bobcats in east-central Ohio using trail cameras. In this presentation, learn about factors that have enabled bobcats to return, their current status in the state, the valuable role they play in ecosystems, as well as efforts underway to improve habitat for bobcats.

Dr. Shauna Weyrauch is an ecologist and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Evolution, Ecology & Organismal Biology at The Ohio State University at Newark. Her research currently focuses on the dynamics of Ohio's recovering bobcat population.

How Can I Help? Saving Nature with Your Yard, Doug Tallamy

(Sunday, open to the public for a fee)

Nearly every day I get emails from people who have read my books and heard my talks and yet still have questions about ecological landscaping. These are good, thoughtful questions about ecology and evolution, biodiversity, invasive species, insect declines, native and non-native plants, conservation and restoration, residential and city landscapes, urban issues, oak biology, keystone plants, Homegrown National Park, monarchs, supporting wildlife at home, and more. In this talk I address as many of these queries as I can with hope that my answers will further motivate people to help restore ecosystem function where they live, work, play, worship, and farm.

Dr. Doug Tallamy is a professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored 112 research publications and has taught insect related courses for 44 years. He has written three books; *Bringing Nature Home*, *Nature's Best Hope*, and *The Nature of Oaks*. Doug has won several awards for his work in conservation.