

Field trips will depart from the Bergamo Center on Sunday at 9:00 a.m. Printed driving directions will be available on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Participants may elect to depart from Bergamo or meet at the destination. Approximate drive time and the general compass direction from Bergamo are included in each description below. Participants will NOT return to Bergamo and should consider how best to drive home from the field trip site.

PLEASE do not cancel or change field trips without consulting the field trip team!
Please bring a refillable water bottle & fill before departing for your field trip destination!

Ratings:

- **Rating 1** – easy walking on mostly even surface or boardwalk
- **Rating 2** – uneven ground, can be muddy or slippery
- **Rating 3** – rough terrain and/or hills, uneven walking surfaces

Trip #1 Cincinnati Zoo Bowyer Farm

In 1995, Bowyer Farm was willed to the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden with the proviso that it be used to further the conservation & education mission of the zoo in a local context. Since then, the property has grown to 600+ acres including a restoration area of 54 acres, 36 acres of wetland, and 18 acres of prairie. Since the restoration of the wetland, more than 200 species of birds have been documented on the property, with bald eagles becoming a frequent occurrence. A major component of the farm is the Native Plant Program, which grows thousands of native plants each year. These plants are then used for landscaping at the zoo's main campus, planted out into the restoration projects, or sold at annual native plant sales. There is a paved parking area, an ADA parking area, shaded shelter, gravel paths and a restroom on the premises. The trails are flat, unpaved, and filled with irregularities. Recommend hiking poles. You will experience both a hike through the property to view native plants, shrubs, and trees, along with a tour of the propagation houses and demonstration gardens.

Rating 2 – due to unpaved trails

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈45 minutes to SSW

Trip #2 Gallagher Fen State Nature Preserve

This 213-acre area is located east of Springfield and is managed by the ODNR Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. It is one of the best prairie fens in Ohio, overlooked by an oak savanna. It has a variety of habitats including stream, savanna, marlstone meadow, oak-hickory woodland. There are a wide variety of species such as Side-oats Grama, Cut-leaf Prairie Dock, Round-leaved Sundew, Nodding Wild Onion, and Kalm's Lobelia. At least 26 state-listed species have been reported from this site.

Rating 3 – unpaved trail through the woods, steep steps down to the fen boardwalk

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈40 minutes to NE

Trip #3 Yellow Springs Native Garden Tour – NEW GARDEN added for 2025!

This tour visits three native plant gardens in Yellow Springs. The first garden is filled with native plants specifically chosen to attract Ohio's butterflies. Flowers, shrubs and trees create a layered habitat with water sources to accommodate the larva and mature butterflies. New to this tour, the homeowners of the second garden removed invasive species and restored the soil of their half-acre lot. Now the property includes a shade ephemeral garden, sun-loving natives, and a 70 sq. ft. cedar enclosure with eleven raised beds for herbs and vegetables. Rain barrels provide water, and four honeybee hives complement the many native bees on the property. The final stop features a property that nineteen years ago was an acre and a half of mostly grass. It now is home to over fifty different native trees and shrubs, as well as native plant gardens and a bee-friendly lawn. The trees will be labeled so that visitors can see their shapes and growing habits. Tree snags and other habitats on the lot provide food and shelter to many birds, insects, and animals.

Rating 1 – lawns & pavement

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈30 minutes to ENE

Trip #4 Beaver Creek Wetlands – James P. Amon Biodiversity Reserve – NEW for 2025!

Formerly known as Fairborn Marsh, the 52-acre Amon Reserve has a variety of habitats, from an upland planted prairie sloping down a narrow wooded strip to the largest open water marsh in the wetland corridor. Rainwater that falls on the upland filters down through the gravelly substrate and emerges in more than 30 seeps along the base of the slope, forming a quaking fen with a high diversity of wetland plant species. A new boardwalk now runs nearly the entire length of the marsh and fen, meandering close to the seeps, then farther into the marsh. Other features include a new bird blind, an observation deck, a nest box trail, and a Purple Martin colony.

Rating 1 – Earthen or grass trails on uneven ground, boardwalk

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈20 minutes to NE

Trip #5 Cedar Bog State Nature Preserve

Cedar Bog is a National Natural Landmark, one of only twenty-three in the state of Ohio. Located south of the city of Urbana, this diverse 446-acre site is actually a calcareous fen with prairie, woodland and wetland species. It ranks the highest of any site in the state on the Ohio Floristic Diversity Index for its great diversity of plants. One can take an easy stroll along the boardwalk and view many rare plants, including Round-leaved Sundew, Grass Pink Orchid, Kalm's Lobelia and Horned Bladderwort. Cedar Bog is also home to a few of Ohio's endangered animals such as the Spotted Turtle, Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake, and Elfin Skimmer dragonflies.

Rating 1 – This site has a boardwalk

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈40 minutes to NNE

Trip #6 Kiser Lake Wetlands State Nature Preserve – NEW in 2024!

Situated on the Farmersville Moraine, the two prairie fens that are protected as state nature preserves within Kiser Lake State Park are the last vestiges remaining of a 360-acre area once known as Mosquito Lake Bog. The alkaline fen remnants found here are all that remain of the much larger wetland complex which formerly occupied the upper Mosquito Creek Valley prior to the construction of the dam to create the lake. The headwaters section, which is open to the public, is approximately 37 acres and consists of open fen meadow, marsh and woodland habitat adjacent to Mosquito Creek. It is lovely in August! Species of interest here include queen of the prairie, shrubby cinquefoil, Kalm's lobelia, Grass of Parnassus, Ohio goldenrod, poison sumac, turtlehead and swamp thistle.

Rating 1 – This site has a boardwalk

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈50 minutes to N

Trip #7 Huffman Prairie State Natural Landmark

Huffman Prairie is a 109-acre remnant of a much larger prairie and fen complex that once covered much of what is now Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. The prairie contains outstanding grassland bird and insect populations, including a moth species found nowhere else. Summer displays of prairie wildflowers and tall grasses are impressive. Because of damage done to the site from previous land uses, restoration activities have been a focus of the base and Five Rivers MetroParks since 1988. The site is adjacent to the world's first airport, the Huffman Prairie Flying Field, a component of the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Park.

Rating 2 – level but unpaved trail

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈25 minutes to N

Trip #8 Washington Township Native Garden Tour – NEW for 2025!

There are four stops on this tour, just a few minutes apart. The first stop will be to view your trip leader's native gravel garden. From there, you will travel to the nearby Centerville/Washington Park District's Donnybrook Park to view a nice restored fen in the middle of a residential neighborhood, accessible via boardwalk. Next is a 2-acre residential property with restored wooded areas bordered by two creeks and a wetland. Over the years, what had

been a vast lawn has been converted to native plant habitat and gardens, with a prairie/meadow planting near the street. The last suburban property showcases prairie plantings in a more formal arrangement in the front yard, while the back yard transitions from lawn to prairie to saplings to the woods of the adjacent Grant Park.

NOTE: There is no street parking at the third stop – you will need to park on a nearby cross street and walk about 300' to the driveway. Parking in the single lane driveway is reserved for those with mobility issues.

Rating 1 – relatively level lawns, boardwalk

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈15 minutes to SW

Trip #9 Kettering/Oakwood Native Garden Tour – NEW GARDEN added for 2025!

The first stop will be the Oakwood Wright Memorial Public Library to view the recently established native sun and shade gardens. This project was inspired by the library's ecology educational programming and the gardens were created by residents and civic groups. Most plants are labeled. Just a one block walk from the library gardens, you will visit a suburban native garden with a small footprint, but high diversity – demonstrating “start where you are.” Next, you will visit two Kettering suburban properties in the same neighborhood, both with a mix of sun and shade gardens. One homeowner is working to convert non-native ground cover to native understory and has added pollinator gardens, plus native trees and shrubs. The other has multiple border gardens with the largest spanning the entire length of the front yard right along the street! All of these gardeners share the goal of planting to support pollinators, birds, and other wildlife within a suburban setting. Comment from a previous attendee about this tour: *“It was truly a microcosm of a lot of the ways natives can be enjoyed and grown: from public garden constraints to growing all your favorites to formal/private exuberance... I loved every single garden!”*

Rating 1 – sidewalks, relatively level lawns

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈15 minutes to W

Trip #10 Native Trees & Shrubs Tour at Native Ohio Plants Nursery – NEW in 2024!

You will be visiting a 6-acre private property to explore the large variety of native trees and shrubs, in both the approximately 4-acre woodland and in groupings planted around the house. The property owner states that the property “may arguably have the most native tree diversity in the Miami/Montgomery County area” and is a good comparison of growth habits of trees in a woodland setting with those grown out in the open. The woodland trail is about ½ mile in length. **Bonus** – there are also two prairie plantings in front of the house to view! He has given this tour to the Dayton Area Wild Ones twice in the last two years – it is excellent!

Rating 2 – the open areas are mostly level lawn; the woodland trail has a moderate slope & can be slippery after rain

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈35 minutes to N

Trip #11 Beavercreek Township Private Property Restoration – NEW for 2025!

We will be visiting an 8-acre private property that was formerly a dairy operation and includes an 1880 farmhouse and a few outbuildings. When acquired, it was primarily honeysuckle and turf grass. For the first few years, the property owner manually removed honeysuckle and replaced it with native shrubs. Then a Clean Ohio grant award helped with more extensive honeysuckle removal and funded the purchase of native plants from MEEC. Five acres of the property, which includes 5 springs or seeps, are protected by a conservation easement through B-W Greenway Community Land Trust. The property owner is in the process of restoring a dry prairie, a wooded area, and two meadows which are replacing turf grass. He is looking forward to showing the various habitats on his property to a group of people who will appreciate his restoration efforts!

Rating 2 – mowed paths, uneven ground. Boots may be required if there has been recent heavy rain

Note: On-site parking is limited; we may need to carpool from a nearby park – to be determined

Limit 15 participants

Drive time: ≈20 minutes to NE
