

# Oak Openings Green Ribbon Initiative

2022 Annual Meeting



# Education & Outreach Subcommittee

- Chair: Brittani Furlong, The Nature Conservancy
- Education professionals, local organizations, and private community members sit on the GRI Education and Outreach Subcommittee and work collaboratively to increase public awareness and engagement in the Oak Openings to ensure that the area's visitors and residents understand not only globally unique the area is, but also how it serves them.





# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

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- Blue Week 2021
  - 22 events
    - 9 in-person
    - 13 virtual
  - 600+ attendees
  - DIY Activities, Photo Contest, and Conservation Awards
- Featured Events:
  - Hike and Bike the Oak Openings
  - Wetland Restoration Tour at the Kitty Todd Preserve



# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

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- Blue Week 2021 –  
Conservation Awards
- Partner(s) of the Year
  - Jenella Hodel and Penny Niday
- Outstanding Volunteer
  - Brittani Furlong





# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

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- Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF)
  - *Engaging teachers and students in the Oak Openings*
- Dates: 10/1/2019—5/20/2021
  - Extension to 5/20/2022
    - Due to COVID an extension was given through May 2022
- Deliverables
  - At least 30 teachers will be trained
  - 3 full-day workshops for teachers
  - At least 600 students will participate in the program learning the value of the OOR
  - HS students and up to 15 teachers will attend a field trip to the OOR





# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

- **2021 OEEF –  
Workshops for Teachers**
- 42 teachers attended training  
one of 3 workshops in June and  
September
  - 17 elementary  
teachers
  - 25 high school  
teachers





# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

- **2021 OEEF –  
Workshops for Teachers**



## From Teacher Survey:

*“ I loved this workshop. It reminded me how much I love of our natural areas and love to share my knowledge with my students. If you ever have funding to do more, I think expanding out to the area parks near the city schools would be great. Let’s show these city kids what natural wonders are right in their hood! ”*





# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

- **2021 OEEF – Field Trips for Students**

- September 2021 at Secor Metropark

- 8 teachers were able to attend field trips with their students
- 6 classrooms (142 students) were able to attend the field trips

- GRI Partners hosted stations

- Metroparks Toledo

- Endangered Species

- The Nature Conservancy

- Invasive Species and Environmental Stewardship

- Lucas Soil and Water Conservation District

- Oak Openings Geology



# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

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- **2021 OEEF – Reinforce New Skills & Knowledge**
- Teachers given lesson plans and classroom support materials to implement
  - 16 elementary teachers took bins
  - 8 high school teachers participated in the field trips
  - A minimum of 500 students will be directly using the resources provided by this grant
- 6 participants registered for the graduate level course through Lourdes University





# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2022 Updates

- 
- Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF)
    - Engaging teachers and students in the Oak Openings

## **OEEF 2022**

- Teacher Portfolios due at end of February
  - Will review, get feedback from teachers for improving lessons
- Oak Openings Educational Summit
  - An opportunity for students and teachers to share what they have learned about the OOR
  - Details COMING SOON!
- Blue Week 2022
  - Theme: Youth in Nature
  - Please encourage your students to attend events!





# Education & Outreach Subcommittee 2022 Updates



**SAVE  
THESE  
DATES!**



Oak Openings Region

**BLUE WEEK**

**MAY 16<sup>TH</sup> – 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2022**

*In-person hikes, virtual educational opportunities for kids and adults, DIY adventures, contests, and more to learn about the unique features of the Oak Openings Region in NW Ohio and SE Michigan.*

**Explore the globally rare in your backyard!**

*Full Schedule COMING SOON!*



# Science Subcommittee

- Chair: Karen Menard, Metroparks Toledo
- Land Managers, local researchers, and private industry members sit on the Science Subcommittee and work to share new information and insights about species and systems in the Oak Openings so that land managers may use resources most efficiently.





# Science Subcommittee 2021 Science Summit Highlights

- In November, 2021, the Science Subcommittee hosted the third annual Oak Openings Science Summit.
- Over 60 people attended.
- Missed the 2021 Science Summit?
  - Find the recorded presentations at:
    - <https://www.oakopenings.org/resources/professionals/research/4th-annual-green-ribbon-initiative-science-summit/>
      - pw: 20GRlsciSummit2!



# Science Subcommittee

## 2021 Science Summit Highlights

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### Presentations

- Dr. Helen Michaels (BGSU): Building Better Butterfly Buffets
- Akinwale Ogunkoya (UT): A Conceptual Model for Assessing Groundwater Flow Within the Oak Openings Region of Ohio
- Dr. Rachel Kappler (Holden Forests and Gardens): Great Lakes Basin Forest Health Collaborative
- Dr. Peter Blank (TNC): Blazing Star Borer Moth Habitat Restoration





# Science Subcommittee

## 2021 Science Summit Highlights

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### Posters

- Sean Britton (BGSU): Wetland Habitat Use by Semiaquatic Fauna in a Hydromodified and Fragmented Landscape
- Kathryn Ware (BGSU): Measuring Avian Activity and Breeding Diversity in Fragmented Pine Plantations
- Sara Rair (BGSU): Vertebrate Roadkill Patterns in a Human Dominated Landscape
- Corbin Kohart (UT): 38 Years Later: A Comparison of Diatom Communities from Oak Openings
- Brian Kron (BGSU): Effects of Urbanization on Ecological Function of Anuran Communities in NW Ohio
- Tim Schetter (Metroparks): Metroparks District-wide Vegetation Monitoring
- Rami Mohamed (Metroparks): Cavity Nesting Bird Success in the Oak Openings Region



# Science Subcommittee 2021 Volunteer Monitoring Highlights

- 2021 Natural Area Monitoring Highlights
- 2,185 Volunteer hours:
  - Bat monitoring;
  - Grassland Bird Survey;
  - Long-term Butterfly monitoring;
  - Cavity Nesting Bird monitoring;
  - Dragonfly monitoring;
  - State-listed Plant monitoring;
  - Breeding Raptor Monitoring
- 1,671 Volunteer hours: Stewardship projects and Blue Creek Seed Nursery Assistant
- 13 research permits issued that included: UT, BGSU, OSU, Toledo Zoo, USFS, BSBO
- Over 100 vegetation plots surveyed in the Oak Openings Region for long-term district-wide study.



# Science Subcommittee 2021 Volunteer Monitoring Highlights

- Total raptor nests located: 51
- 7 species of Bats found at Oak Openings Preserve and Wildwood; 6 species found at Secor
- 150 Eastern Bluebirds fledged at Oak Openings Preserve, Wildwood and Secor
- 133 Ohio Endangered and Threatened plant populations were monitored
- 11 Lark Sparrow sites surveyed with 16 breeding pairs documented and 32 adult individuals documented
- 42 species of dragonflies documented at Wiregrass Lake
- 23 species of butterflies documented at Wiregrass Lake; 38 species at Oak Openings Preserve; 28 species at Wildwood Preserve



# Science Subcommittee 2022 Updates

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- Next Science Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for March 10 from 12 pm – 2 pm
  - This year's agenda topics are currently in progress
- A few projects in 2022:
  - U.S. Forest service Climate Change Tree Study (testing the acclimatization and development of trees potentially adapted to the climate of the future in a context of restoration of degraded northern hardwood stands);
  - Blazing Star Borer Moth monitoring at south end of Oak Openings Preserve (within units not included in grant)
  - Expansion of frog calling study to Secor's new park property
  - Breeding bird point count study district-wide



# Stewardship Subcommittee

- Chair: LaRae Sprow, Metroparks Toledo
- Land managers, local organizations, and private community members sit on the GRI Stewardship Subcommittee and work to share new information and insights about non-native and invasive species and best management practices in the Oak Openings so that land managers and community members may use resources most efficiently.







# Stewardship Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

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- Save Our Great Lakes (SOGL) Grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.
  - This grant was awarded to The Nature Conservancy who is working in partnership with The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Metroparks Toledo, and The Olander Parks System.
  - This grant, titled “Maintain The Gain” focuses restoration in areas that were previously restored using federal funding sources. Grant will continue through 2022 growing season.



# Stewardship Subcommittee 2021 Accomplishments

- Blazing Star Borer Moth grant from US Fish and Wildlife Service was awarded to The Nature Conservancy.
- Focus was is SE Michigan with goal to restore 308 acres of habitat and plant 4000 dense blazing star plugs.
- Insect surveys were completed by Michigan Natural Features Inventory. Another grant was awarded to begin in 2022 to continue restoration in habitats that support Blazing Star Borer Moth.
- This restoration will focus primarily in Ohio portions of OOR.





# Stewardship Subcommittee

## Adopt A Natural Area (AANA) Program

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- Personalized volunteer experience
  - Get to know one natural area in-depth
  - The Satisfaction of Seeing Results
  - Free professional training
  - Recognition
- *Contact: Brittani Furlong,  
[brittani.furlong@tnc.org](mailto:brittani.furlong@tnc.org) for more information*







# Stewardship Subcommittee: Native Plant Working Group

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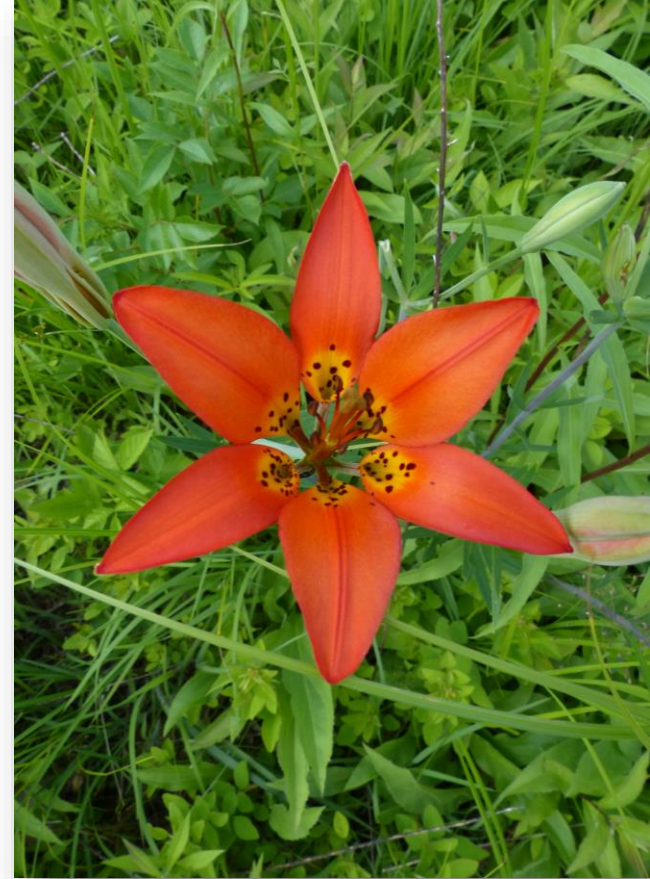
- **2022 Blue Week Plant Sale**
  - Committee formed and planning event
  - Growers – Metroparks Toledo, Wood County Park District, Chris Link, others?
  - Plant Sale Dates:  
**May 21 – 22,**  
**10 am – 4 pm**  
**Blue Creek Nursery**
  - Shrubs \$10, Forbs \$6

# Stewardship Subcommittee: Native Plant Working Group

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## **2022 Ohio Native Plant Month (April)**

- GRI Oak Openings website
  - Advertise partner projects and provide links, focus planning on NW OH region
- Organize and sponsor hikes at select locations;
  - Criteria: Nice displays of spring wildflower
    - Bradner Preserve (Wood Co. Parks), Gall Woods SNP (ODNR), others?
- Other ideas:
  - Native plant learning centers (org. that exists year-round)
  - Sites/preserves/parks could be learning centers;
  - Invite public to share pictures, photo contest?
  - Events specific for kids?







# Stewardship Subcommittee: Native Plant Working Group

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## • Plant Materials Exchange

- 2 Active sites/groups/landowners
- Four new applications

## • Species of Greatest Conservation Concern

- *Filipendula rubra* (Queen-of-the-Prairie)
  - New population discovered on OH side of the Oak Openings; looking into contacting the owner
  - Very important to continue management on remnant populations
- *Lithospermum caroliniense* (Plains Puccoon)
  - Seeds were unable to be collected at some sites due to availability
  - Some sites lost, some sites declining
- Other Species:
  - *Comptonia peregrina* (Sweetfern),
  - *Coreopsis lanceolata* (Sand coreopsis)

## • Looking Into Funding For Oak Openings Flora



# Stewardship Subcommittee: Native Plant Working Group

## Contacts

- Blue Week Plant Sale
  - *Brittani Furlong:* [brittani.furlong@tnc.org](mailto:brittani.furlong@tnc.org)
- Ohio Native Plant Month
  - *Penny Niday:*  
[penny.niday@metroparkstoledo.com](mailto:penny.niday@metroparkstoledo.com)
  - *Brittani Furlong:* [brittani.furlong@tnc.org](mailto:brittani.furlong@tnc.org)
- Other/General Native Plant Working Group Questions
  - *Brian Yahn* [brian.yahn@tnc.org](mailto:brian.yahn@tnc.org)





# Stewardship Subcommittee: Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA)

- Oak Openings CWMA Coordinator:
  - Brian Yahn

## **General**

- Servicing the Green Ribbon Initiative Partners
- Building on previous invasive species work
  - USEPA\_GLRI\_InvasivesEarlyDetection\_2014 - 2019
  - Invasive species plan/strategy
  - 22 BMPs completed in 2019
  - OORAM plots; well established across Kitty Todd and Toledo Metroparks



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# Stewardship Subcommittee: (CWMA)

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- **2019 -2021 CWMA #1 Grant from U.S. Forest Service (GLRI)**
- **Deliverables Met:**
  - OORAM plots continued, 287 new assessment units (AUs) covering 4,876 acres were delineated across 9 ownerships
  - 2,267 acres surveyed on 153 AUs across the OOR (MI and OH)
  - 10 new BMPs completed, GRI-OO invasive spp. panels developed to complete spp. assessments
- Mapping Invasives
  - Working with MISIN – Midwest Invasive Species Network (data transferred)
  - Survey123 data entry form completed and used by TNC and Metroparks Toledo;
  - 200 new invasive spp. points collected with Survey123 and sent to MISIN



# Stewardship Subcommittee: (CWMA)



- **New/Current Grant –**
  - **June 2021 thru Feb. 2023**
- **Early Detection Rapid Response in the OOR; USFS CWMA # 2**

Requirement	Deliverable
<b>Ecological niche modeling in coordination with MT utilizing Maxent</b>	15 Probability of Occurrence maps for target species
<b>Increased citizen stewardship awareness</b>	4,000+ people empowered with knowledge
<b>Landowner management empowerment</b>	2 virtual workshops, 35+ landowners engaged
<b>High threat invasive patches identified</b>	Collect occurrence data on 500+ acres
<b>Strike team treats high threat invasive patches</b>	50 acres treated (partner focus)
<b>CWMA Education/Coordination</b>	4 partner meetings, 1 conference presentation

# Stewardship Subcommittee: (CWMA)

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- **New/Current Grant –**
  - **June 2021 thru Feb. 2023**
- Early Detection Rapid Response in the OOR; USFS CWMA # 2

## In 2021

- Predict suitable habitat for 15 high risk invasive species;
- Underway with meetings and planning; include TNC, Metroparks of Toledo and MISIN staff; we are targeting mapping efforts for the species with low occurrence data (need more than 10 records each)
- GRI Newsletters sent out every month to nearly 1000 subscribers; w/ a section on invasive species
- 2 Workshops in September were held for Landowners, 1 virtual and 1 in-person; nearly 100 landowners and partners attended
- August thru October: 300+ acres surveyed by trained seasonal employee and/or coordinator
- Grant updates, species info. requests and survey notifications for GRI Oak Openings subcommittees and annual meetings; also CWMA article written for the Fall Issue of OORC newsletter.





# Stewardship Subcommittee: (CWMA)

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Porcelain Berry;  
Photo by Leslie J. Mehrhoff,  
University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org.

- **New/Current Grant –**
  - **June 2021 thru Feb. 2023**
- Early Detection Rapid Response in the OOR; USFS CWMA # 2

<b>High threat invasive patches identified</b>	Collect occurrence data on 500+ acres
<b>Strike team treats high threat invasive patches</b>	50 acres treated (partner focus)

## In 2022

- Summer of 2022: survey 200+ acres on partner and private landowner property
  - *Please notify me if you have property that you want surveyed (for EDRR)*
- Summer of 2022: strike team will treat 50 acres of land, targeting populations of the 15 high risk invasives (EDRR)
  - *Please notify me if you have EDRR locations that you want treated*
- Continue with other deliverables (Maxent Modeling, Outreach Workshops and Meeting, etc.)

# Stewardship Subcommittee: (CWMA)

- Will you help us identify and map EDRR in the Oak Openings??
- [redacted] *Fewer than 10 observations in OOR in MISIN*
- [redacted] *Those of mapping concern*

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Japanese Stiltgrass

© Richard Gardner

## CWMA 2 Target Species (15 species)

Reed Canary Grass	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>
Japanese Knotweed	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>
Oriental Bittersweet	<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>
Japanese Barberry	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>
<span style="background-color: yellow;">Callery Pear</span>	<span style="background-color: yellow;"><i>Pyrus calleryana</i></span>
Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>
Winged Burning Bush	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>

Japanese Stiltgrass	<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>	(3)
Spotted Knapweed	<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	(7)
Black Swallow-wort	<i>Vincetoxicum nigrum</i>	(?)
Poison Hemlock	<i>Conium maculatum</i>	(2)
Porcelain Berry	<i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i>	(3)

Japanese Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>
<span style="background-color: yellow;">Teasel</span>	<span style="background-color: yellow;"><i>Dipsacus fullonum</i></span>
Purple Loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>



# Looking Ahead





A photograph of a field of purple lupine flowers. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing deep purple and others lighter shades. The background is a soft-focus green field with some sandy ground visible in the upper left. A semi-transparent white rectangular box with a thin black border is centered over the image, containing the text "Thank You" in a black serif font. A thin horizontal line is positioned below the text.

Thank You



# Questions & Community Input

