

# FLOW

Explore. Discover.  
Understand. Act.

Friends of the Lower Oolentangy Watershed

Photo courtesy of George C. Anderson Photography

## WINTER 2015

### A Fund for FLOW's Future

FLOW has taken a step to protect its long-term financial security by setting up a \$25,000 endowment fund with Columbus Foundation.

FLOW's income and expenses have fluctuated over the past few years, but success with grants and corporate donations and a continued determination to cut expenses helped to build a nest egg to invest in Columbus Foundation Green Funds. When needed, FLOW can draw on this investment.

It is hoped that the endowment may encourage interest from larger philanthropic groups. The Fund will let FLOW earn a higher return than typical bank accounts and help achieve the mission of a clean and safe Oolentangy River for all to enjoy.



FLOW Treasurer Brian Ogle with Lisa Jolley of Columbus Foundation and FLOW Chair Gretchen Farnung met to establish the Friends of the Lower Oolentangy Watershed Fund on May 8, 2014.

### Coming Attractions

FLOW has lots to choose from this year. Some focuses are:

#### Tree planting

Earth Day tree planting is Saturday, April 18, along Bill Moose Run behind the Ohio School for the Deaf, 500 Morse Road. There are also many other locations available through Green Columbus ([www.greencbus.org](http://www.greencbus.org)). You can request free native tree seedlings for your own use.

#### Butterfly gardens

FLOW is looking for sites to plant three butterfly pollinator gardens with the focus on Monarchs. Volunteers are also needed to water and weed the new gardens. Garden clubs or other groups or individuals can email FLOW.

#### Adopt-A-Pond

FLOW's Adopt-A-Pond program will continue improving more ponds in the Oolentangy watershed. This includes trees, other vegetation, nutrient control and other factors that lead to healthy, clean water. Additional ponds are being sought.

#### Camp Mary Orton

FLOW has a big project initiative this year to remove invasive plants from a large forested area at Camp Mary Orton. This is close to the good habitat at Flint Run and the exceptional warmwater habitat reach of the Oolentangy.

(cont. on inside)



E X P L O R E • D I S C O V E R • U N D E R S T A N D • A C T

## Coming Attractions *(cont. from pg. 1)*

### **Olentangy Village and Clinton-Como Park**

FLOW is working with the Olentangy Village Condo Association to minimize invasive plants there. This is a key spot adjacent to Clinton Como Park, which has been cleared of invasives and being replanted with native vegetation. It is also across from the OSU wetlands. Less invasive honeysuckle in the surrounding area means these areas will have a better chance of remaining native.

### **River Cleanups**

FLOW's river cleanup program removes trash from and around rivers. Trash is more than unsightly. Metals rust and pollute the river and plastics get covered with silt and prevent plants and animals from living there. Styrofoam breaks into bits and is eaten by fish. Cleanups will be scheduled and listed on FLOW's website, and those walking along trails can pick up litter to help keep the river healthy.

### **Eyes and Ears of the River**

A river steward is someone who keeps an eye on the river and reports issues. For those who want to do more, there is a need to look for bugs and check water chemistry. FLOW is planning to partner with the Sierra Club to train interested individuals.

### **Many other Activities**

FLOW has many other activities throughout the year. Community involvement is key in all activities. Please check the website for up-to-date information.

### **For more Information**

Unless noted otherwise, for more information about any FLOW activity, send email to [info@olentangywatershed.org](mailto:info@olentangywatershed.org) and see the Facebook group Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW).

## Solving the Plastic Bags Dilemma

They clog waterways, kill marine life, and their particles are in the food we are eating every day.

FLOW is researching ways to incentivize the use of reusable bags. Various options exist:

- Individuals can opt for reusable bags.
- A community-wide approach could be set up. The single-use plastic bags can be banned or incur a fee. Reusable bags could result in a financial incentive.

Bag bans or fees are in place in hundreds of U.S. cities and counties, and in other countries. The Clintonville Area Commission has passed a resolution recommending that Columbus regulate single-use plastic bags.

What will be the approach taken by Columbus to enact a practical, humane, and effective bag solution? That is the question being studied by the city.



## The Transformation of Clinton-Como Park

Bees, butterflies, amphibians, and human visitors to Clinton-Como park are benefitting from the combined efforts of FLOW, the City of Columbus, and community volunteers...and the improvements will continue next year.

Already, FLOW has planted a couple hundred trees along the east border of the park, where invasive honeysuckle was removed by the city.

The park is along the east side of the Olentangy River, south of W. Como Ave., and the restorations are primarily south of W. Pacemont Road. The Olentangy Trail bike path runs through the park.

FLOW is studying how to best benefit pollinators like bees and butterflies with five test plots. These areas are about 10 feet by 10 feet and contain different mixes of host plants such as milkweed and Black-Eyed Susan. By studying these over the next few years, FLOW hopes to determine what methods to use in other areas.

Next year, the muddy drainage areas near the basketball court may be transformed into amphibian habitat with the addition of native plants.

If you would like to participate in the park restoration, please contact FLOW. The contact information is on the back page.



## FLOW calendar of events

APRIL

18

FLOW has a variety of activities throughout the year. Please join in!  
Check FLOW's calendar at [www.olentangywatershed.org](http://www.olentangywatershed.org) for upcoming events.



## My Favorite River Spot

By Linda Hart

One of my favorite river spots is near Ohio State University Fawcett Center, the site of one of FLOW's big tree plantings several years ago. The flowing river, the large shade trees along the banks, and the swaths of young trees and grasses nearby create a bustling wildlife center.

On any given visit, I usually experience something unexpected, even transcendent — a heron with a fancy plume standing motionless on the bank, a family of deer strolling, red foxes chasing each other in the grasses, buckeye and mulberry trees, lightning fast ground bees buzzing. It's always a privilege to enter this vibrant space and see what natural wonders unfold.

Photo credit: Linda Hart

## Thanks to our Watershed Partners

- Thanks to those who donate to FLOW through the Kroger Community Rewards program. This gives FLOW a percentage of eligible purchases at no cost to the shopper. Please see directions on the FLOW website.
- Thanks to those who donated to FLOW via workplace giving programs through Earthshare of Ohio and the United Way. Many federal, state, municipal, and county employees chose FLOW as their charity of choice. FLOW also received workplace donations from employees of Battelle, Dell, and Cardinal Health .
- Thanks to Anheuser Busch Columbus Brewery for their annual volunteer service events and a number of other actions that support FLOW and better water quality in central Ohio.
- In addition to Anheuser Busch, thanks also to Columbus Distributing, Northwest Properties MAD Scientist, Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries (FACT), Xenos Christian School, and Columbus Rec and Parks for helping with the Glen Echo stream and pollinator garden cleanup, which removed invasives and trash and added beneficial plants.
- Thanks to summer intern Chris Liebold and best of luck with law school.

## Donate 5% to FLOW every time you shop at Kroger – renew your Plus card now!

By registering your Kroger Plus card, you can help FLOW receive a donation of 5% of qualified purchases under the Kroger Community Rewards Program at no cost to shoppers. Use your registered Kroger Plus card when shopping for each purchase to count. Kroger requires that all participants renew each year beginning May 1. Visit our website at [www.olentangywatershed.org](http://www.olentangywatershed.org) for the link and instructions.



**Published By:**  
Chair – Gretchen Farnung  
Vice Chari – Andrew Heckler  
Treasurer – Brian Ogle  
Secretary – Laura Fay

Linda Hart  
Steve Leahy  
David White  
Kent Halloran  
Jim Palus

**Newsletter:** Lindalee Brownstein  
**Newsletter Layout:**  
Ellie Nowels, Centipede Graphics

**Contact FLOW**  
3528 N. High St., Suite F,  
Columbus, OH 43214  
614-267-3386 (phone)  
info@olentangywatershed.org  
www.olentangywatershed.org  
Facebook group: Friends of the  
Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW)

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed  
3528 N. High St., Suite F  
Columbus, OH 43214

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed is a non-profit organization dedicated to keeping the Olentangy River clean and safe for all to enjoy through public education, volunteer activities, and coordination with local decision makers. FLOW is registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt, nonprofit charitable organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

**FLOW relies heavily on volunteer participation to create positive change in our watershed.** Please contact us for information on how you can volunteer. We have a wide variety of opportunities to fit your schedule and match your skills and interests.



## Linden to Become Leafier

The Linden area of Columbus is destined to become leafier this year with the Re-Leaf Linden project.

FLOW is looking for locations for tree plantings. These can be tree lawns, private yards, businesses, schools, churches, and any other area where trees will be a benefit and where someone will commit to watering.

In addition, volunteers are needed to plant trees or to water specific trees during dry spells.

Please email [info@olentangywatershed.org](mailto:info@olentangywatershed.org), or check the FLOW website, <http://www.olentangywatershed.org/> for details.

Some benefits of a more complete Linden tree canopy include:

- Healthier ecology of Glen Echo Ravine, which handles storm water from two square miles, including I-71. Reducing Glen Echo flash floods will allow for healthier plant and animal growth, reduce erosion and sediment, and protect the water temperature and quality of the Olentangy River. Currently, the area is considered impaired and lacks the expected fish and invertebrates.
- Trees are an inexpensive ways to get storm water to soak into the groundwater, where it will be clean and the right temperature when it goes into the Olentangy.

- Trees help reduce the hot, contaminated water coming off lawns and asphalt.
- Trees provide enjoyable shady spots around schools and sidewalks, and are especially useful for people who cannot be in the sun.
- Trees are visually appealing and add value to property.

Re-Leaf Linden is a partnership among FLOW, The North Linden Area Commission, The Columbus Foundation, Columbus SOUP, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, Riverside Native Trees and Nursery LLC, and the Godman Guild.

## Trees for Mom...or for Others

Here's a lasting way to honor Mom on Mother's day – or honor or remember a very special person: sponsor a tree or two in their name. On April 18, volunteers will plant the trees along Bill Moose Run, an Olentangy River tributary that runs behind The Ohio School for the Deaf. Your honoree will receive a letter describing the gift.

You can also purchase trees or shrubs for your own use. Choose from a number of native trees and shrubs that range from \$25 to \$30 each. Please see <http://riversidenativetrees.com/fundraiser/olentangy-river-restoration-planting/> for details, or email [info@olentangywatershed.org](mailto:info@olentangywatershed.org) with a subject of "FLOW Trees."