



CONSERVATOR

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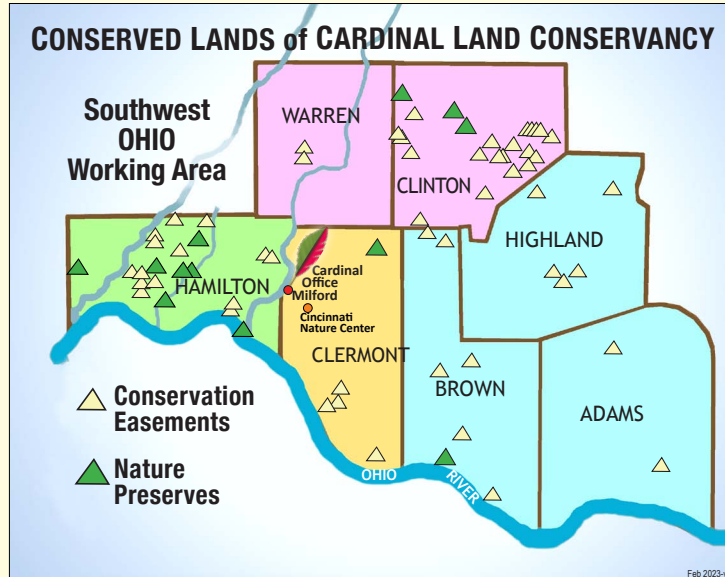
Thanks to you — for an incredible 2022!

By Bill Hopple, *Board President*

Special thanks to our growing community of supporters and land donors! Because of you, Cardinal Land Conservancy has a lot to celebrate for accomplishments in 2022!

Far and away, the greatest accomplishment was adding staff to meet the demands of our growth. We were able to increase to five full time and two part time professionals, all with excellent skills and tremendous passion. This is critical to better care for the properties we already protect and respond to the opportunities that continue to come our way.

Our thanks to 358 members



and donors who made this accomplishment possible by making contributions totaling close to \$300,000 — more than double the amount raised in 2021.

This increase in financial support and staffing made the following possible during 2022: ■ protection of an additional 300 acres of prime farmland, ■ acquisition of the forested

20-acre former Waldorf site adjacent to Bahr Farm, ■ restoration of a 30-acre prairie at Caesar Creek Nature Preserve, ■ planting 15 acres of pollinator-friendly pasture at Bahr Farm, ■ installation of 1 mile of gravel trail at Bortz Family Nature Preserve, ■ cleanup of Rinsky Nature Preserve after a tornado caused extensive damage. ■ And, last, but certainly not least, installation of the Eagle Cam at Bortz Family Nature Preserve.

Watching Bonnie and Clyde last year brought joy to over 30,000 people. We are honored to have such strong and growing support.

Bonnie & Clyde return to the nest

By Andy Dickerson, *Executive Director*

Another year has come around and we are fortunate enough to have Bonnie and Clyde back in their nest in the Bortz Family Nature

Preserve. So many things can happen to animals in the wild—that we do not take their return for granted.

We waited with bated breath and saw them begin to renew their pairbond by adding sticks and grass to the nest in January this year.

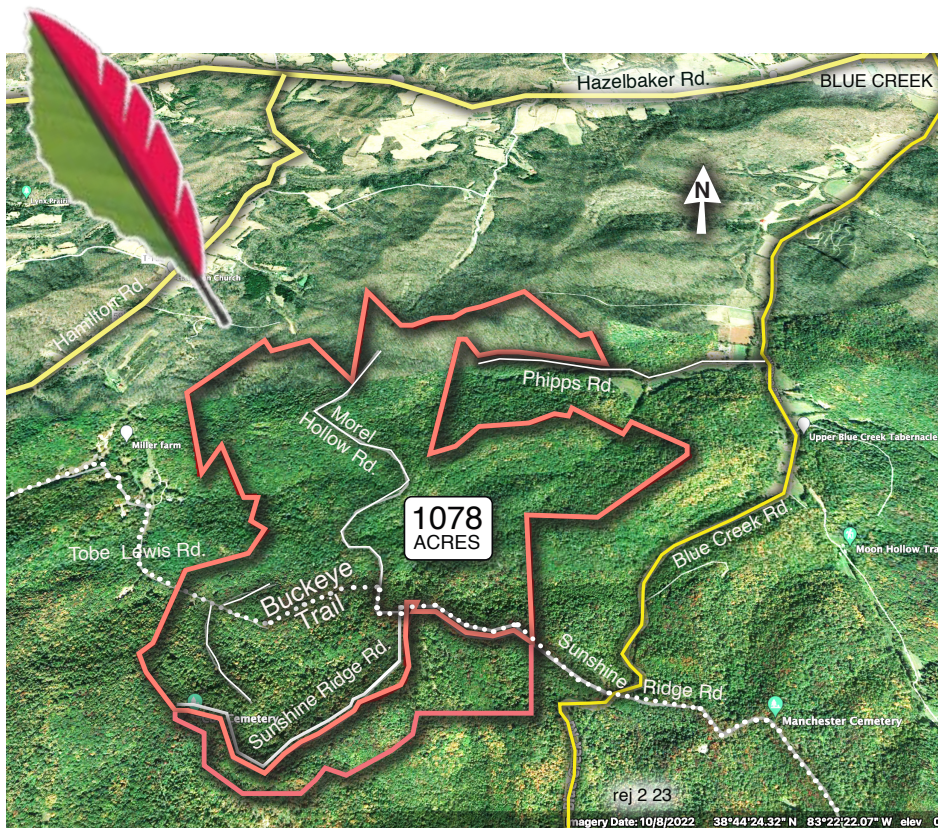
This year, we have a bit of a treat for you: two livestreaming Eagle Cams on Bonnie and Clyde!

Bad windstorms late last spring left our original camera dangling by its internet cable. We were able to work with friends and partners to get up in the tree and get it secured and install another hi-definition fixed camera that includes sound. This year, we will hear the eagles call to each other when it's time for the changing of the guard as they care for their clutch. You can find the link to both cameras on the Cardinal website— <https://www.cardinallandconservancy.org/eagle-camera/>. As of Feb. 16, Bonnie and Clyde have three eggs which they



VISIT www.CardinalLandConservancy.org

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1,078-acre forest in Adams County protected by Cardinal

By Mark Besserman, *Stewardship Director*

The McCoy Forest in Adams County—on the eastern edge of Cardinal’s 7-county project area—is the largest privately held property on which Cardinal Land Conservancy holds an agricultural conservation easement that protects it forever from unwanted future development.

The conservation easement was created in 2007 by the Southern Ohio Farmland Preservation Association, one of the founding organizations of Cardinal. Property owners Jack and Roxanna

McCoy use Best Management Practices for the sustainable harvest of timber products and use the property for recreational hunting and camping.

In addition to a historic log cabin and four old cemeteries, the Buckeye Trail passes through Cardinal’s protected property. A 1,444-mile hiking trail looping through the entire state of Ohio, originally created in 1959, has the goal to foster historical and cultural awareness of the Buckeye State.

Engage with us in 2023!

By Lauren Stanula,
Development Manager

Cardinal membership has grown in the last year and with that has come increased interest in volunteer opportunities and group outings.

- Monthly work days at Bahr Farm will begin on March 11 and will be held on the second Saturday of each month thru October.

- Cardinal is also hosting a live willow harvest and staking event at Bortz Family Nature Preserve on Sat., March 4.

- Group hikes will begin in early spring. These include a high-water hike at Bortz Preserve, a wildflower hike at Kope Hollow, and a natural disturbance hike at Rinsky Woods. At Rinsky Woods, we will revisit the sites that sustained tornado damage in 2022, and photograph/record the progress of the area.

- For updates on these events, and to sign up for email alerts, check Cardinal’s website.



Connect with Cardinal!

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Facebook
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Cardinal’s Mission

Preserve natural habitats, waterways, agricultural lands and open space we love in Southwest Ohio by working with individuals, families and communities.

Stepping Into 1800s History

By Nick Hartley, *Facilities Manager*

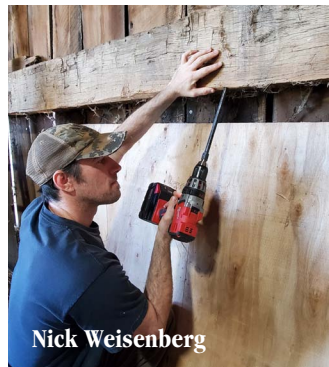
Do you know what Abraham Lincoln, Charles Darwin, and Edgar Allen Poe all have in common? They were all born in 1809. Turns out, 1809 is also the year that the barn at Bahr Farm was built! This makes it one of the oldest buildings in the City of Cincinnati.

Initially, the best guess we had was 1830-1840. Then a local timber framer estimated the barn was built before the 1820s, based on old construction techniques like “marriage marks.”

Getting help from experts

Bahr Farm staff contacted Nick Weisenberg from the dendrochronology lab at Wooster College. Nick was able to drill out nine core samples from multiple beams throughout the barn. Based on the number of tree rings present in each sample, seven core samples dated 1808 and two in the spring of 1809, officially dating the barn to circa 1809.

This remarkable discovery sheds new light on our local history, allowing visitors to step 214 years into our agricultural past.



LEFT: Drilling core samples from beams. ABOVE: Finding “marriage marks” etched into the lumber.

Bonnie & Clyde return Continued from Page 1

will take turns incubating for 35 days. Bonnie will be the primary incubator, but Clyde will bring her food and take his turn on the eggs when she needs to take a break. It is so fascinating to see how careful they are when they approach and lay on the eggs. So, what happens when they sit on the eggs? The increased amount of daylight after the winter solstice causes an increase in hormone production in the eagles. These hormones cause the gonads to swell in preparation for mating, egg-laying and incubation. An extremely interesting change that eagles (and many other birds) go through is



the creation of a brood patch. The oestrogen increase leads to the feathers on their bellies dropping off, and an increase in red blood cells to the area to keep in extra warmth. This happens right before the eggs are laid. The size of the brood patch is determined genetically. The number of eggs the female eagle lays depends on the size of her brood patch! We anticipate hatch dates for the eggs to be during the third and fourth week of March. Let's be sure to root for Bonnie and Clyde as they start their journey in 2023 of getting their young successfully raised and fledged from the nest.

Cardinal Nature Preserves

Check out Details & Trail Maps below:

RINSKY WOODS NATURE PRESERVE

CLERMONT COUNTY

<https://www.CardinalLandConservancy.org/rinsky-woods-nature-preserve/>

TODD'S FORK NATURE PRESERVE

CLINTON COUNTY

<https://www.CardinalLandConservancy.org/todds-fork-nature-preserve/>

KOPE HOLLOW NATURE PRESERVE

BROWN COUNTY

<https://www.CardinalLandConservancy.org/kope-hollow-nature-preserve/>

BORTZ FAMILY NATURE PRESERVE

HAMILTON COUNTY

<https://www.CardinalLandConservancy.org/bortz-family-nature-preserve/>



Cardinal

LAND CONSERVANCY

www.CardinalLandConservancy.org

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*A land trust working for you in the
7 counties of Southwest Ohio:*

- Adams ■ Brown ■ Clermont ■ Clinton
- Hamilton ■ Highland ■ Warren

Hike it right

By Josh Matheson, *Land Manager*

While hiking is a pastime that can be enjoyed year round, variable weather patterns like what we experience in SW Ohio can be the difference between a good trail experience and a bad one.

Since opening four preserves in 2022, Cardinal has been learning a lot about how best to maintain our trails and create a positive experience for every season. Thanks to some insight from the Cincinnati Nature Center's Troy Warnken, we are creating "smart hiking guidelines" for all Cardinal preserves.

These guidelines will not just help ensure a positive hiking experience through rain, sleet, snow and sun, they will also help protect our natural trails' common issues like trail "braiding," habitat disturbance, and invasive species distribution.



- Try to only hike natural trails (not paved or graveled) when conditions are dry. If you do come upon a muddy spot, please turn around or walk through it. Walking around the muddy areas causes trail braiding and worsens the trail condition over time.
- Choose to hike gravel or paved trails when conditions are muddy.
- Trails are designed to provide a positive interactive experience that is best for people and nature. Going off-trail poses many issues. First, walking off-trail disturbs the natural habitats for wildlife. Second, walking off-trail increases the chances of spreading invasive plant species (ex. lesser celandine and Japanese stiltgrass seeds). Finally, we work hard to make the trails safe for people. Going off-trail increases your risk of injury from hanging branches to uneven ground.