

Berea College Forestry Outreach Center December Newsletter & 2022 Year in Review



2047 Big Hill Rd. Berea, KY

FOC Hours:

Tues.-Sat. 10:00-4:00

Sun. 12:00-4:00

Closed Dec. 21st-Jan 3rd
Trails & outdoor restrooms
will be open, dawn to dusk

December Events:

- Pinnacles group hikes Saturdays at 1:00 pm. Meet at the FOC. All welcome! *No group hikes Dec. 24th or 31st*
- Dec. 7th, 3:30 pm Whose Track is That? activities, all ages

December Moon Phases:



Full Moon: Dec. 8th New Moon: Dec. 23rd

Last Quarter: Dec. 16th First Quarter: Dec. 30th



Learn more on our website under 'Skies Over the Pinnacles'



2022 was filled with great community and beautiful nature...

Thank you to everyone who partnered with us, attended an event, or walked on the trails. We are thrilled to share the Berea Forest with old and new friends. We are thankful for new connections we have made this year that strengthen our community and our stewardship of the natural world.

The Center welcomed over 10,000 visitors in 2022! That makes a total of 36,000+ since we opened in 2018.



Getting Folks Outdoors

This year we had the pleasure of having over 1,200 people of all ages join us for hikes, events, and programming. We appreciate each and every one of you and hope to see you again in 2023!

A New Home for the Horses

The College's Suffolk Punch draft horse family has a new barn to call home! This facility will help support the sustainable, animal-powered logging in Berea's forest. See if you can spot the new barn from the lookout on West Pinnacle...

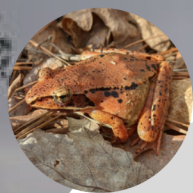


Bewildering Berea

We love getting kids engaged in learning about the natural world around them. We practice place-based learning, which means fostering inquiry and curiosity about our home and focusing activities on the native wildlife we have here in Berea.

Kids are often surprised by what they don't know and how much intriguing wildlife there is to discover in Berea. We like to introduce families to activities they can do on their own, no expertise required--just curiosity!

Thank you to Berea Kids Eat, Berea Community Middle and High School, Upward Bound, Sunshine Homeschool Group, and Parson's Counseling for learning with us.



3,151
Species
identified

(2,749 in 2021)

by
561
Observers on
iNaturalist

(401 in 2019)

Berea's Biodiversity

The Biodiversity of the Berea College Forest is a project on iNaturalist.com that is built by citizen science--community-driven data collection of the flora and fauna found here. Hundreds of visitors to the Berea College Forest have helped document over 3,000 unique species of wildlife.

Madison County participated in the City Nature Challenge for the first time in 2022. This bioblitz documented over 800 species with 2,000+ observations! John Abrams, the FOC's Ecologist, dedicates many hours to exploring and identifying species. Along with citizen contributions, every day the biodiversity of the forest becomes clearer and more representative of just how complex and healthy this unique ecosystem is.



Considering Home

The Forestry Outreach Center and Berea College Archaeology were honored to have hosted a event that took place on November 12th here at the base of the Pinnacles, the ancestral home of Shawnee and Cherokee people. Students, community members, archaeologists, and tribal leaders shared an incredible day of learning through conversation about topics of mutual relevance. Berea students offered activities for children of all ages, including small plots to demonstrate archaeological dig sites. Special thanks to the Chief Ben Barnes of the Shawnee Tribe, Second Chief Roy Baldrige, Shawnee Tribe THPO Tonya Tipton, and Education Director Joshua Shawnee for travelling from Oklahoma to join us--and to the donor who sponsored the event.



Senior Student Highlights

It will be a bittersweet time for the FOC and Forestry Department when we say "see you later" to five amazing students, two graduating in December and three in May.

Elijah Hicks (top left) has worked in all aspects of the FOC since joining us his sophomore year. From leading hikes and sharing his vast knowledge of plants contributing his plant I.D. to mentoring a graduate of Berea Community School in a job transition program, Elijah brings so much positive energy and enthusiasm to his work. His latest project involves successfully cultivating mushrooms to grow on man-made substances such as face masks and plastic water bottles! (middle left). We can't wait to see where his path leads him next.

Zen Dean (bottom left) has worked diligently at honing his forestry and horsemanship skills while working with the department's horse loggers. He is prepared and eager to continue working with draft animals after graduation and is making steps towards acquiring his own team.



Mattie Jenkins worked a secondary labor position with the horse loggers and will graduate in December of this year. Working with them and the horses was a haven away from campus and she enjoyed learning from people whose skills and knowledge could not be taught in a classroom. After graduation, Mattie would like to explore traditional technologies like horse logging that are community-centered rather than industrialized.



T.R. Nolen brought hard work, compassion, and quiet humor to the Forestry Department. He is dedicated in balancing his job, schoolwork, hobbies, and relationships. T.R. has gained valuable experience in the field and is looking to work in a forestry-related job after graduation. In the future, he may be interested in pursuing a job in wildland fire.

Patience Martin joined the FOC team this past summer and continued with us in the fall as her secondary position. She brought creativity and enthusiasm for getting folks out in nature to create art by leading multiple hike & paint events as well as helping with programming for kids. After graduation this month, she is interested in working in public policy or helping increase higher education access.



Always More to Discover...

Professor Emeritus Ralph Thompson, John Abrams, and Glen Dandeneau worked on an addendum to the existing inventory *Vascular Plants of the Berea College Forest* that will be published in *Castanea* this month. Their research added 45 new species, bringing the total flora of the Forest to 1,087 species. If interested in learning more, contact John at abramsj@berea.edu.

Biodiversity of the Berea College Forest

Number of Unique Species
as of November 2022

Invertebrates: 1,569

Seen Most Often:
Monarch butterfly
Danaus plexippus



Plants: 988

Seen Most Often:
Crane-fly Orchid
Tipularia discolor



Fungi: 352

Seen Most Often:
Turkey Tail
Trametes versicolor



Birds: 130

Seen Most Often:
Northern cardinal
Cardinalis cardinalis



Reptiles: 24

Seen Most Often:
Eastern Box Turtle
Terrapene carolina



Mammals: 31

Seen Most Often:
Eastern Gray Squirrel
Sciurus carolinensis



Amphibians: 25

Seen Most Often:
Eastern newt
Notophthalmus viridescens