



Lower Howard's Creek Nature & Heritage Preserve 2010 Late Winter & Spring Hikes/Events Schedule

www.lowerhowardscreek.org

Late winter is the perfect time to see historic features and the “lay of the land” without the cover of vegetation in the Lower Howard's Creek Preserve. Join us as we explore different natural and cultural features that only reveal themselves in the winter when the leaves are absent from the trees, and the wildflowers are still slumbering. Join us, too, when the wildflowers burst from their winter sleep and herald the arrival of spring with their riot of color. May and June hikes are being planned to include a variety of programs as the trees gain their canopy leaves, and warm weather returns to the Valley.

Group size is limited so please call the Preserve manager at (859) 744-4888 and leave a message to make reservations. Since this is a Kentucky State Nature Preserve, no dogs are allowed on the hikes. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult. Hikers should dress according to the expected weather. The terrain at the Preserve is quite steep and rocky, so please wear appropriate shoes or boots. Shallow creek crossings are a possibility on all hikes and your feet may get wet. Please call the preserve manager if there is a question about suitability of the weather. It is recommended that you carry water and trail snacks. Hike is free to members of the Friends of Lower Howard's Creek, \$5 donation suggested for each non member.

March 6, 10:00 a.m. Geology of the Lower Howard's Creek Valley We will explore the valley's geological features, including the Tufa formation on Trimble Creek, different strata of limestone as revealed by quarries, palisades, and the creek bed itself, and a discussion about the karst topography that underlies it all. Moderately strenuous, 3 hours.

March 10, 9:00 a.m. Volunteer Day: Join other volunteers to clear bush honeysuckle from selected areas while we look for early signs of spring flowers. Moderately strenuous, 2-4 hours.

March 13, 10:00 a.m. Long hike/West Fork: The winter weather kept us from taking any long hikes, so this will be a make-up for an earlier cancelled event. We will scout new trails and reconnoiter winter damage to existing trails. Strenuous with numerous creek crossings, 4 hours.

March 20: Trail Maintenance – Closed Date. Central Kentucky Back Country Horsemen volunteer day.

March 27: 10:a.m.Thompson Ridge Settlement and the lower valley quarries.

Explore an area that was populated until the mid-20th century when its last residents moved away from the creek. This hike will follow the original Athens-Boonesborough route. John Holder and his enterprises will be a topic of conversation, as well as an infamous triple murder that occurred here in 1939. Some of the earliest ephemeral wildflowers should be blooming by this date. Moderately strenuous, 3 hours.

April 3, 10:00 a.m. Forest Ecology. Join Dr. Bill Crankshaw, retired forest ecologist, for a hike to look for the earliest spring wildflowers and get an education about the ecology of the area. Discussions about the effects of industrialization on the natural resources of the valley and good examples of natural reclamation will be shown.

Moderately strenuous, 3 hours.

April 10, 9:00 a.m. Winchester Weigh Down hike. The Clark County Activity coalition sponsors a wonderful health initiative to get people in Clark County moving while encouraging other healthy habits, such as losing weight. Today we welcome members of the WWD to enjoy our Preserve at its peak of wildflower bloom while taking advantage of their continuing healthy lifestyle! Moderately strenuous, 3 hours.

April 14, 10:00 a.m. Heirloom daffodils and early spring wildflowers. Midweek hike, this walk will highlight several abandoned home sites where all that remains to remind us of human habitation are the daffodils, daylilies, yucca, and vinca minor the settlers planted. This is the prime time of year when the wildflowers put on their riotous display, so make reservations early for this event. Steep slopes will be traversed in order to access the old homesteads, so come prepared for one of our more strenuous hikes, 3-4 hours.

April 17, 10:00 a.m. Wildflowers galore! Prime weekend to showcase a large variety of native wildflowers in the gorgeous venue of the Lower Howard's Creek Valley. Moderately strenuous, the hikes will last at least 3 hours, because we have to stop so often to identify new species!

April 22, 10:00 a.m. EARTHDAY - Wildflowers galore! Walk on the wild side and take a break from the daily grind to stop and see the wildflowers. Great time to showcase a large variety of native wildflowers in the gorgeous venue of the Lower Howard's Creek Valley. Moderately strenuous, the hikes will last at least 3 hours, because we have to stop so often to identify new species!

April 24, 10:00 a.m. Wildflowers galore! Should be another great weekend to showcase a large variety of native wildflowers in the gorgeous venue of the Lower Howard's Creek Valley. Moderately strenuous, the hikes will last at least 3 hours, because we have to stop so often to identify new species!

Guest tour guides are being scheduled, and will be announced as their programs become available. Volunteer training for invasive plant eradication, trail construction, environmental education, and historic interpretation are being planned. If you would like to schedule a private hike for a family or group, call the reservation number, 8590744-4888 to find out available dates.