



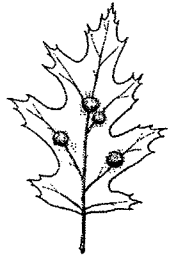
Friends of the Gorman Nature Center Newsletter

Richland County Park District

Autumn 2011 Vol 30, No 3

Gorman Nature Center Calendar of Events - Autumn 2011

Fri	Sep 2	9:00 pm	The Night Sky - a monthly telescope program at GNC- only if the sky is clear (SM)
Wed	Sep 7	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (for parents and their pre-school children, sessions 9-10 and 10-11 am) (MT)
Sun	Sep 11	2:00 pm	"Best Fronds Forever" - a workshop to learn about the "wood ferns" in Richland County - with the Mohican Native Plant Society - at the Mohican Outdoor School- see more details on the next page (SM)
Wed	Sep 14	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Wed	Sep 14	7:30 pm	Live Music at GNC - "Highlands of Ohio" presents Jim Malcolm - call 419-522-5058 or see highlandsofohio.com
R-S	Sep 15-18		Midwest Birding Symposium at Lakeside, Ohio- see midwestbirding.org for details
Wed	Sep 21	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Sat	Sep 24	11:00 am	"Insect Homes" - a talk and walk at GNC to find insect structures (see page 4) (MT)
Wed	Sep 28	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Sat	Oct 1	1-4 pm	"Grass Identification Workshop" - led by botanist, David Brandenburg. Registration required- contact Rick Gardner to register at 614-638-0013 or Rick.Gardner@dnr.state.oh.us.
Wed	Oct 5	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Thu	Oct 6	1:30 pm	Fall Nature Walk for Seniors at GNC (JF)
Wed	Oct 12	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Sat	Oct 15	11-? pm	"Fall Family Fest" - at the Ohio Bird Sanctuary-- call 884-4295 for times & details
Wed	Oct 19	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Sun	Oct 23	2:00 pm	"A Simple Natural Time" - this program will be a surprise, based upon the weather- see page 4 (MT)
Wed	Oct 26	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Mon	Oct 31	7:30 pm	The Night Sky - a monthly telescope program at GNC- only if the sky is clear (SM)
Wed	Nov 2	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Thu	Nov 3	7:00 pm	"Ohio's Native Trees- The Inside Scoop" - by Brian Riley, a botanist and dendrologist for the Ohio Division of Forestry- see page 4.
Wed	Nov 9	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Wed	Nov 16	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Sat	Nov 19	9:00 am	"Hunting for Hammerheads" - a walk at Mohican in search of Pileated Woodpeckers - meet at GNC to car-pool (SM)
Wed	Nov 23	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Tue	Nov 29	7:00 pm	The Night Sky - a monthly telescope program at GNC- only if the sky is clear (SM)
Wed	Nov 30	9 & 10	Moms & Kids (MT)
Sun	Dec 11	2:00 pm	"What's Up Duck?" annual "Waterfowl Watch" at nearby reservoirs - meet at GNC
Sat	Dec 17	all day	Mansfield Christmas Bird Count - call (419) 884-3764 for details



All programs free to the public. (JF=Jan Ferrell, MT=Merrill Tawse, SM=Steve McKee)

Green Newsletter

If you would prefer an email version of the newsletter to save paper and postage, please email us at gormannaturecenter@gmail.com. Thanks.

Richland Flora - The Wood Ferns

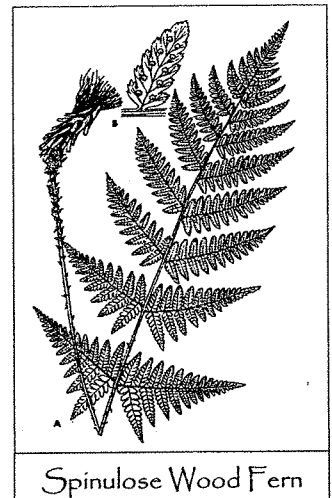
Everybody recognizes a fern when they see one, and I have yet to meet a person who didn't find them appealing. Their different shapes, sizes, colors and textures add a pleasing quality to the forest floor, rocky slopes and cliffs of our county. Did you know that there are 41 species of ferns and fern allies in Richland County? Probably the grandest and most notable of our ferns are the "Wood Ferns". We have six species of wood ferns, found in most of the forested habitats that you may visit: a woodlot near your home, a pine plantation, a large old-growth forest, and a swampy woods.

The "Wood Ferns" will be the subject of this year's annual wild plant workshop. For the 16th year, we will offer a workshop to learn about a special group of wild plants that you can find in our area. Past workshops have included maples, oaks & hickories, vines, shrubs, ferns, sedges, violets, ash trees, non-photosynthetic plants, goldenrods, conifers, duckweeds, the trees of South Park, and several others. The workshops are held in association with the **Mohican Native Plant Society**, a local group of wild-plant enthusiasts. This year's **free public workshop** is entitled "**Best Fronds Forever**" and will be held at the Mohican Outdoor School Field Trip Center on Bunkerhill Road, in between SR 97 and SR 95 east of Butler, on Sunday, September 11 at 2:00 pm. Call GNC at 884-3764 if you need directions.

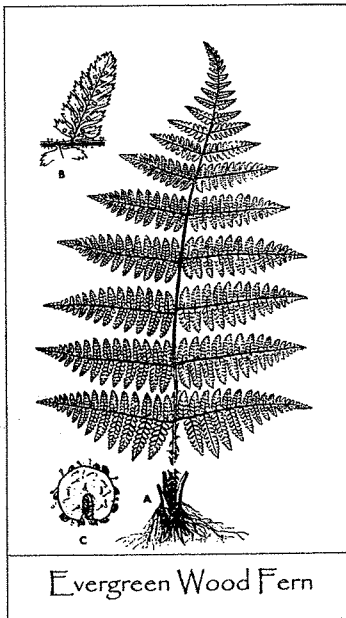
I mentioned some different forested habitats above. Let's take a mental visit to some of them now. This will help you develop a "search image" for the six wood fern species in Richland County.

So if you are walking in a typical woods in north-central Ohio- deciduous, a little scrubby, dry or wet soil, maybe with some pine plantation element, no large rock outcroppings- you are likely see a "lacy" fern that is light green.

Your first thought should be **Spinulose Wood Fern** (*Dryopteris carthusiana*). There are other lacy ferns (Lady Fern, New York Fern, Rattlesnake Fern, and Fragile Fern), but they aren't wood ferns. The wood ferns have scaly stalks at the base of the plant and the spores are covered with a tiny piece of circular tissue called an indusium. You will notice that the Spinulose Wood Fern has pinnae (the large "leaflets" of a fern) that tend to reach upwards at an angle. Check to see if the inner lower pinnule on the basal pinna is longer than the second pinnule.

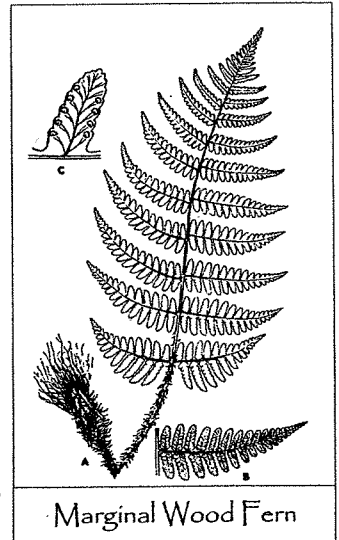


Spinulose Wood Fern



Evergreen Wood Fern

If you move into a rockier woods (such as at Mohican, Malabar Farm, Hemlock Falls, etc) and you find an even lacier fern that is darker green, you suspect the other lacy wood fern, the **Evergreen Wood Fern** (*Dryopteris intermedia*). If it is growing on a rock face or a sandstone ledge, then you know you should look to see if the second inner lower pinnule is longer than the first. If you still aren't sure, get out your handlens, because the presence of little hairs that look like tiny hat-pins will confirm it.

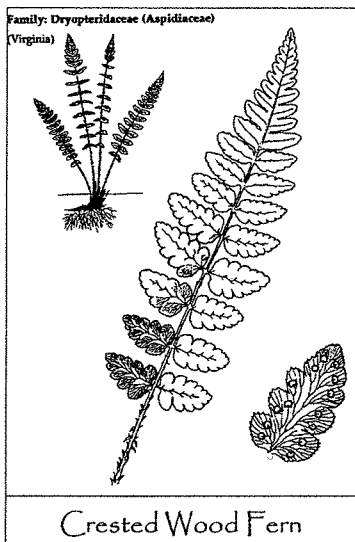
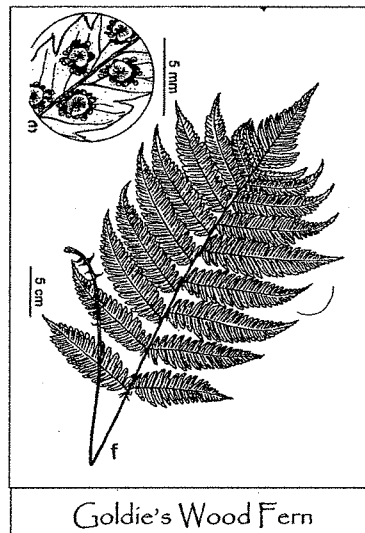


Marginal Wood Fern

Any rocky woods, especially those with slopes & ravines, could have the **Marginal Wood Fern** (*Dryopteris marginalis*). This fern is not as "lacy" but is

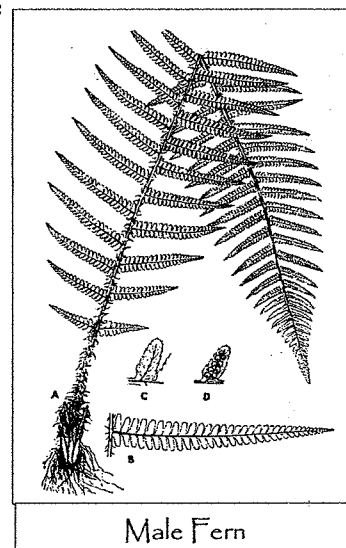
“bipinnate”, which means the leaf is not cut into as many tiny segments. The Marginal Wood Fern has a dark bluish-green color and has a thick, leathery texture. The “spore dots” on the bottom of the frond are located very close to the margins of the pinnules- thus the name of the fern.

If you travel to a moist, rich woods, especially one with deep, cool ravines, keep your eye out for **Goldie’s Wood Fern** (*Dryopteris goldiana*). This is one of my favorite finds in the woods. There are only 3-4 places that we know of this fern in Richland County, and 3-4 more in Mohican. It is a very large, beautiful fern (sometimes called the Giant Wood Fern) with fronds 3-4 feet long. The leaves are a bluish-green color that often have greenish-gold blotches. Both the main frond and each pinna taper very quickly to a point.



What about wet habitats: wooded swamps, wet woods, shallow marshes, open shrubby wetlands? This is where you watch for **Crested Wood Fern** (*Dryopteris cristata*). These are tall, upright, narrow, ferns with almost parallel sides. The fertile pinnae rotate to a horizontal plane (like an open Venetian blind), and the lowest pinnae are almost equilaterally triangular in shape. They are uncommon in our area due to the infrequency of wetlands.

The final local wood fern is the **Male Fern** (*Dryopteris filix-mas*), which can be argued to be the rarest plant in Richland County. Why is that? There is only one known Male Fern plant in our county and only three known plants in our entire state! You aren’t likely to discover it, but if you do, please let us know. Look for a bipinnate fern that tapers some at the base, like an Ostrich Fern does, and has long, almost parallel-sided pinnae. There are two different kind of scales- broad and hair-like.



If you would like to see these ferns in person, so that you can develop a better search image, please attend our “Best Fronds Forever” workshop on September 11.



I am eager to help support natural history education in Richland County and to receive your quarterly newsletter. Please enroll me in “Friends of the Nature Center” at the following level for one year:

Name _____
 Address _____

 Phone (optional) _____

Please clip and send to:

Friends of the Nature Center
 2295 Lexington Ave.
 Mansfield OH 44907

_____ \$2.00 Fledgling (student)
 _____ 5.00 Cardinal (individual)
 _____ 10.00 Flock (family)
 _____ 25.00 Owl (supporting)
 _____ 50.00 Hawk (sponsoring)
 _____ 100.00 Eagle (sustaining)

Enclosed is my membership donation for \$ _____
 (please make checks payable to “Friends of the Nature Center”)

INSECT HOMES

Saturday, September 24 at 11:00 am

As the warm season fades away the vast number of insect created structures, previously hidden, now become visible. These include homes built by bees and wasps, excavated structures by ants and termites and structures like galls formed by insect and plant interactions. Join us for this inside portion followed by a hike to find various ones still remaining along our trails.



A Simply Natural Time

Sunday, October 23 at 2:00 pm

You won't know until you get here! Exactly what we will be doing on this simply natural program will be left to the directive of the weather, the seasonal flow and to the naturalist. Depending on the weather we will take a hike to focus on the phenomenon of the day, or be inside examining animals and other natural objects. Join us and be surprised.

Ohio's Native Trees- The Inside Scoop

Thursday, November 3 at 7 pm

by Brian Riley

Brian will give an overview of Ohio's native trees with an emphasis on which species are questionable as being truly native to Ohio, extremely rare, overlooked, or misunderstood. He will also discuss which trees in surrounding states are knocking on Ohio's door.

Brian is a Service Forester, Dendrologist & State Forest-lands Botanist. He has a keen interest in botany with an emphasis on dendrology. In 2010, he was appointed State Forest Lands botanist by the Chief of the Ohio Division of Forestry. He is perhaps best known in the world of Ohio botany as the discoverer of Sugarberry in 2008, which became first new native tree species found in Ohio since 1941.

Green Newsletter

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A red X in the box at the right means that it is time to renew your "Friends of the Nature Center" membership. Thanks for your support!

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