



## Visiting the Preserve

The Edge of Appalachia is a nature preserve where all plants and animals are protected. Uses of the preserve include hiking, nature study, photography, education, and scientific research. Visitation hours are from sunrise to sunset. The preserve offers three public access areas: Buzzardroost Rock, Lynx Prairie and The Wilderness. Other areas of the preserve are accessible by special permission or through hikes and educational programs sponsored by Cincinnati Museum Center or The Nature Conservancy. Organized groups should contact the preserve in advance of their visit. Research projects require the approval of the Edge of Appalachia Research Committee.

### Lynx Prairie

Lynx Prairie, the first project of The Nature Conservancy in Ohio, became a National Natural Landmark in 1967. This preserve features a series of natural grassland openings that appear as islands in an otherwise forested area. These natural openings, referred to as xeric limestone prairies, are prevalent throughout the Edge of Appalachia Preserve System. They have thin shallow soils with dolomitic bedrock at or near the surface, a significant amount of tree and shrub growth, and an abundance of native grasses and forbs. The summer-blooming grasses and forbs are at their peak from late July through September.

Over 200 plant species have been identified at Lynx, including the dominant grasses: big and little blue stem, indian grass and side-oats grama. Some of the more colorful flowering species include purple coneflower, prairie dock, rattlesnake master, and several species of blazing star. The trail at Lynx Prairie begins in the southeast corner of the East Liberty Church cemetery and is a series of loops: Green, White and Red. Enjoy the whole 1.5 miles of easy trail or circle back to the cemetery at any exit sign.

#### Directions to Lynx Prairie

From West Union travel east on State Route 125 for 9 miles to Tulip Road near the town of Lynx. Turn right on Tulip and go .3 miles to East Liberty Church, turn left into church parking lot and proceed to cemetery behind church. Park on side of cemetery lane and proceed to southeast corner of cemetery for trailhead.



### Buzzardroost Rock

Buzzardroost Rock is named for the turkey and black vultures, or buzzards, frequently seen soaring over or roosting on the rock and associated cliffs. This rock promontory is comprised of dolomite, a type of limestone that is the fossilized remains of an ancient reef-like structure that flourished in a warm, shallow sea some 350 million years ago. The rock is situated nearly 500 feet above the level of Ohio Brush Creek and provides an outstanding view of the Ohio Brush Creek Valley. The trail to Buzzardroost Rock passes through a number of plant communities and provides the opportunity to witness the region's diverse geologic history.

The trail traverses four separate rock strata including Estill Shale (gentle slopes with red cedar), Lilly/Bisher and Peebles Dolomites (cliffs and steep slopes with oak-maple forests), and Ohio Shale (Appalachian oak forest dominated by chestnut oak). Buzzardroost Rock provides habitat for a number of rare prairie species including the state endangered plains muhlenbergia grass. The trail to Buzzardroost begins at a parking lot at the eastern end of Weaver Road. The hike is strenuous, with a round trip distance of 3 miles.

#### Directions to Buzzardroost Rock

From West Union travel east on State Route 125 for 6.7 miles to Weaver Road (first road after Ohio Brush Creek). Turn left on Weaver and go .9 miles to trailhead parking lot on the right.

### The Wilderness

Purchased in 1968, The Wilderness is one of the larger expanses of unbroken forest in the preserve system. Named for the impression it gives, The Wilderness is a mix of forest communities from Appalachian forest types to the globally rare White Cedar Bluff Woodland. Remnant prairie communities also persist along cliff edges and narrow ridges underlain with Peebles Dolomite. Untouched by glaciers, dolomite cliffs rise from the forest floor and deep shaded ravines provide a backdrop for outstanding spring wildflower displays. Remnant prairie openings flower in late summer and are followed by exceptional opportunities for fall foliage viewing.

This preserve contains over 50 rare plant and animal species, and 3 plant communities that are considered globally rare. The 1,200 acre preserve contains one of only two sites in Ohio for endangered Canby's mountain lover (a plant) and one of the few sites of the rare limestone adder's-tongue fern. The 2.5 mile Wilderness loop trail is a moderate walk and links several routes originally laid out by two preserve founders, the late Richard and Lucile Durrell. The preserve system was named in their honor.

#### Directions to The Wilderness

From West Union travel east on State Route 125 for 8.8 miles and turn left on Lynx Road (paved). Go .3 miles to Shivener Road (gravel) and turn left, proceed to parking lot and trailhead at end of road.







The Richard and Lucile Durrell  
Edge of Appalachia  
Preserve System



Gray-headed Coneflowers

Cincinnati Museum Center is a nonprofit scientific and educational organization organized in 1818. Museum Center's mission is to inspire all people to understand and appreciate natural history, science, and regional history; and to support the development of children. We collect and preserve; advance and share knowledge. We stimulate curiosity and promote enjoyment of learning. Correspondence and membership information can be directed to: Preserve Director, Edge of Appalachia, 4274 Waggoner Riffle Road, West Union, Ohio 45693, (937) 544-2880, www.cincinnati-museum.org



The Nature Conservancy is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. Correspondence and membership information can be directed to: The Nature Conservancy, Ohio Chapter, 6375 Riverside Drive, Suite 100, Dublin, Ohio 43017, (614) 717-2770, www.nature.org



The Edge of Appalachia Preserve System is the result of a very special partnership between the Ohio Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and Cincinnati Museum Center. Since the preserve's establishment in 1959, The Nature Conservancy and Cincinnati Museum Center have shared the same vision of stewardship and conservation for this unique part of Ohio's natural heritage. Together they have made this preserve one of the largest privately owned protection projects in the eastern United States. With their combined expertise in conservation and education, The Nature Conservancy and the Museum Center have set a standard for cooperative endeavors in this field.



Dan Collins, photographer

The Partnership



E. Lucy Braun, 1950 - Hugh H. Raup, photographer

Preserve Overview

As you travel east through Adams County in south-central Ohio, the rugged hills of the Allegheny Plateau abruptly rise above the countryside. Here, at the Appalachian Escarpment, sprawls one of the most biologically diverse collections of natural systems in the Midwestern United States. Amid rocky slopes, rolling meadows, and deep moist ravines, relict plant communities have persisted for thousands of years. Wild turkeys share the area with green salamanders and allegheny woodrats, both endangered in Ohio. Here, too, The Nature Conservancy and Cincinnati Museum Center own and manage a series of eleven nearly contiguous preserves, collectively called the Richard and Lucile Durrell Edge of Appalachia Preserve System, the largest privately owned protected natural area in Ohio.

The Edge of Appalachia provides critical habitat for some 130 rare species of plants and animals. Four areas in the preserve, Lynx Prairie, Buzzardroost Rock, Red Rock and The Wilderness, are registered National Natural Landmarks, testimony to their national significance. The eminent ecologist E. Lucy Braun first called attention to the biodiversity of "The Edge" in the 1920s. Her students, Richard and Lucile Durrell, were early leaders in the effort to preserve this outstanding natural area.

Programs Offered

The preserve offers outstanding opportunities for outdoor education and recreation for all ages. Cincinnati Museum Center offers Science Camp programs from June through August for teens and preteens to learn more about southern Ohio's rich natural heritage. Science Camps are conducted at the Rieveschl Chalet, generously gifted to the museum by Dr. George Rieveschl Jr. in 1978. Naturalist led hikes are offered throughout the year. For more information contact the Museum Center's Preserve Director.

Area Amenities

The preserve's Eulett Center (pictured) is available to rent for community and business meetings. Food, lodging, and other services are available eight miles west of the preserve in West Union. The town of Lynx has a store with gasoline. Picnic facilities are available at Adams Lake State Park off St. Rt. 41. Camping is available at Shawnee State Park. Contact the Adams County Travel and Visitor's Bureau, (937) 544-5454, in West Union for a list of in-county Bed and Breakfasts and other lodging.

