



The Bartram Foundation

Pre-Spring 2026 Digest



Coming Soon!

Grand Opening Spring 2026 - The Bartram Nature Center!

We are thrilled to announce the Grand Opening of our brand-new **Bartram Nature Center** — a space designed for learning, exploring, gathering, and growing. This center will serve as the heart of our mission, offering opportunities for individuals, families, and classrooms to engage directly with our natural world.

What to Look Forward To:

- Interactive workshops
- Hands-on conservation programs
- Guided nature hikes
- Seasonal retreats
- Youth science classes
- Community volunteer days
- Pollinator and native gardens
- And much more!

This opening marks a major milestone for our foundation — and we can't wait to welcome you through the doors!

Why It Matters

Every preserved acre, every planted seedling, every workshop taught, and every child inspired is an investment in a healthier, greener future. Together, we are building a legacy that honors the past while protecting tomorrow. Please Consider Donating to The Bartram Foundation today and help continue our mission of *Preserving Today for Their Tomorrow*





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Top Story!



A New Chapter Begins: Restoring Native River Cane

By Bea Mills

*The Bartram Foundation is proud to announce the launch of a new and ambitious initiative: restoring Native River Cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) and the ecosystems it once sustained across our country.*

Native River Cane was once abundant throughout vast regions of the United States. These dense canebrakes formed thriving ecosystems that protected waterways from erosion, provided essential habitat for birds, amphibians, and countless other species, and supported generations of traditional building, crafts, and land stewardship practices.

Today, that landscape has largely disappeared.

Over the last century, the dramatic loss of Native River Cane has contributed to habitat collapse, increased erosion along waterways, and even species extinction — including the Carolina Parakeet and, more recently, Bachman's Warbler. The disappearance of this native plant represents not just the loss of a species, but the unraveling of an entire ecological system.

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A New Chapter Begins: Restoring Native River Cane

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Our Vision

The Bartram Foundation is taking action.

Our immediate goal is to purchase land where we can begin re-establishing strong populations of Native River Cane. This land will serve as a living research site where we can:

- Restore healthy cane ecosystems
- Study the biodiversity they support
- Evaluate natural, plant-based erosion control solutions
- Develop long-term conservation strategies

This effort is designed as the foundation of a long-term restoration project. As it grows, we plan to share our findings through education and outreach programs, offering opportunities for community members and volunteers to learn, engage, and participate in hands-on restoration work.

This is not just a research initiative. It is a commitment to stewardship, education, and rebuilding what has been lost.

A Community-Powered Effort

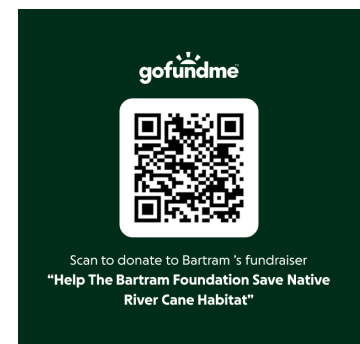
We recently launched a public “ GoFundMe “ fundraiser with an initial goal of \$25,000 to help secure land and diverse native plants to begin the first phase of restoration. This milestone represents the critical first step toward long-term impact.

Every contribution — whether financial support, shared awareness, or future volunteer involvement — moves this vision forward. This project may have begun as a bold idea, but it will grow through community partnership.

Together, we can restore Native River Cane, strengthen biodiversity, and protect our waterways for generations to come.

We are deeply grateful for your support as this new chapter begins.

<https://gofund.me/139e9d7e2>





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La Niña and What It Could Mean for Ohio's Outdoors This Season

By Bea Mills

You may have heard meteorologists announce that we're in a La Niña pattern this year. While it begins in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, La Niña has a measurable ripple effect that can shape winter here in Ohio — especially for those of us who spend time outdoors.



Photo: Bea Mills

The Science Behind It

La Niña occurs when sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific cool below average. That cooling alters global atmospheric circulation, shifting the jet stream across North America.

For the Midwest, this often means:

- A more active northern jet stream
- Increased opportunities for Arctic air to dip south
- A higher likelihood of storm systems tracking through the Ohio Valley

It doesn't dictate daily weather, but it does stack the deck toward certain seasonal trends.

What That Could Mean for Ohio

Colder Air Masses

La Niña winters often bring sharper cold snaps. For gardeners and land stewards, that can mean deeper soil freezing and extended periods of dormancy.

Lake-Effect and Clipper Systems

Northern Ohio, especially near Lake Erie, may see enhanced snowfall from lake-effect events. Even central and southern regions can experience frequent "clipper" systems — fast-moving storms that bring bursts of snow and wind.

Variable Conditions

La Niña winters can swing between thaw and freeze cycles. Those fluctuations impact wildlife behavior, tree stress, and even trail conditions.

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Why It Matters Outdoors

For those who garden, manage land, hike, birdwatch, or simply observe seasonal rhythms, La Niña can subtly influence:

- **Tree health and sap flow timing**
- **Overwintering pollinators and insects**
- **Wildlife feeding patterns**
- **Spring soil readiness**
- **Pruning and planting timelines**



A colder winter can reduce certain pest populations, while fluctuating freeze-thaw cycles may challenge shallow-rooted plants. Snow cover, however, can act as insulation — protecting perennial roots from extreme cold.

As always in Ohio, variability is part of the story. La Niña increases the odds of colder, more active winter conditions — but flexibility remains key.

For those who follow the land closely, it's another reminder that Ohio's landscapes are connected to global systems. What begins as ocean cooling thousands of miles away may shape the stillness of our woods, the depth of our frost line, and the timing of spring's first stirrings.

Stay warm, keep your boots ready — and watch the signs of the season.





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Appalachian Folklore: Signs of Spring

Long before modern forecasts and climate models, Appalachian communities read the land itself for signs of seasonal change. Spring was not marked by a calendar date, but by patterns in plants, animals, and sky.



~Photo: Bea Mills Fairfield County, Ohio

One well-known saying claims, *“When the redbud blooms, winter’s truly gone.”* The soft lavender haze along hillsides was seen as a reliable signal that soils were warming and planting time was near.

The call of the spring peeper frog has long been considered one of the first true announcements of the season. Their evening chorus rising from wetlands meant thawed ground and flowing water. Another bit of mountain wisdom suggests that when woolly bear caterpillars show more brown than black, a mild season lies ahead — a bit of weather lore passed through generations, even if modern science debates its accuracy.

Appalachian farmers also watched the dogwood blossoms closely. An old rhyme warns:

“Plant corn when the oak leaves are the size of a squirrel’s ear.”

Rather than relying on dates, this guidance tied planting to observable growth cycles — aligning crops with soil temperature and daylight naturally. These traditions reflect something deeper than superstition. They represent close, patient attention to the rhythms of the natural world — an attentiveness that still serves us well today.

In Ohio, where Appalachian foothills meet Midwestern plains, those old signs still echo each spring — in blooming redbuds, peeper songs at dusk, and the steady unfolding of leaves.

Spring Migration Along the Mississippi Flyway



~Photo: Bea Mills Tufted Titmouse

Ohio sits squarely within the Mississippi Flyway — one of North America’s four major bird migration corridors. Each spring, millions of birds travel north from Central and South America, following river systems and shorelines as natural navigation guides.

After long overnight flights, migrating birds rely on woodlots, wetlands, and early-blooming native plants to rest and refuel before continuing north.

In a colder La Niña-influenced spring, migration timing can shift slightly. Prolonged cold snaps may delay insect emergence and flowering, which in turn affects when certain species move through. Conversely, strong south winds ahead of spring storm systems can trigger dramatic “fallout” days — when waves of warblers, thrushes, and tanagers appear almost overnight.

For Ohio birdwatchers, peak migration typically runs:

- Late March–April: Waterfowl, blackbirds, early sparrows
- Late April–May: Warblers, orioles, grosbeaks, tanagers
- May: Shorebirds along Lake Erie and inland wetlands

Keep an eye on budding trees, listen for new songs at dawn, and watch for activity after warm southern winds. Spring migration is one of the Midwest’s most remarkable natural rhythms — and Ohio offers a front-row seat.

To Join our E-Mail list, please contact: bartramfoundation@gmail.com





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Our Vision:

To protect Ohio's natural areas, restore native ecosystems, and inspire people of all ages to connect with the outdoors—today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

What We Do:

- **Preserve Land & Wildlife** – Safeguarding forests, fields, waterways, and habitats for the plants and animals that call them home.
- **Restore Native Ecosystems** – Reclaiming and renewing land through native plantings, habitat restoration, and sustainable stewardship.
- **Inspire Outdoor Exploration** – Encouraging hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, gardening, and stargazing to foster a lifelong love of nature.
- **Provide Education & Skills** – Hosting workshops, classes, and retreats that teach environmental science, land management, and outdoor skills.
- **Support Conservation Research** – Collecting field data to guide future conservation efforts and possibly rediscover lost or undiscovered species.
- **Build Community Connections** – Bringing together families, schools, volunteers, and partner organizations to create a united force for nature.

Why It Matters:

We believe every person—especially children—should have a safe, welcoming space to experience the wonder of the outdoors. By preserving land and teaching the value of nature, we are planting the seeds for a healthier, greener, and more connected future.

Join Us:

Volunteer, participate in our programs, or help preserve land for the next generation. Every effort, big or small, keeps the promise of nature alive.

Who It Matters To:

Our President, George Bartram—descended from John Bartram, America's first botanist—continues a family legacy of exploration and stewardship. The foundation's work reflects that ongoing commitment to preserving the natural world for generations to come.

[CLICK TO DONATE TODAY](#)

