



# The Fringe

Newsletter of the Native Orchid Preservation and Education Society

<https://nativeorchidpreservationeducationsociety.com>

Volume 2024 - 2

## Letter from the President

Hello everyone,

This has been a very different year. With a warm winter, our orchid hikes took a hit; our timing was off all season with orchids that bloomed early, and the blooms didn't last long with the hot dry weather. Hopefully next year will be a more normal year!

We will be having a Members Meeting in November, so watch for emails from Jan, which will come out once our speaker is lined up. Hope to see everyone soon in person or on Zoom.

Teresa Huesman



*Cypripedium acaule*

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## Upcoming Hikes

### September 28 - Betsch Fen

Betsch Fen in Ross County is a 90 acre permit only state nature preserve owed by the Nature Conservancy. The fen meadow contains *Sanguisorba canadensis*, Canada Burnet; *Symphyotrichum puniceum*, Purple Swamp Aster; *Oligoneuron ohioense*, Ohio Goldenrod; *Spiranthes incurva*, Sphinx Ladies' Tresses and *Gentianopsis virgata*, Lesser Fringed Gentian. For those of you who have registered consider bringing snacks and/or lunch as well as rubber boots and and a possible walking stick due to a possible creek crossing and uneven terrain. Please RSVP to Angela Carter at [wildflowerfieldtrips@gmail.com](mailto:wildflowerfieldtrips@gmail.com) or 513-300-2787 by Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>. We will meet at 10 am off I-35 and caravan and/or carpool depending on interest and number of attendees. Driving directions will be provided following registration and a confirmation email to all participants.



*Spiranthes incurva*



*Gentianopsis virgata*

## October 5 - E. Lucy Braun Lynx Prairie

*You don't want to miss this!* Treat yourself to the fragrance of the native orchid, the Great Plains Ladies' Tresses, *Spiranthes magnicamporum*. These are found at Lynx Prairie in the fall, one of our favorite viewing places for orchids and wildflowers. Growing close to the road, these and often butterflies can be seen from the car. For those wanting longer walks, other nature preserves such as the Chaparral State Nature Preserve and Shawnee State Park are close by.

- **Date:** October 5
- **Meeting Place:** Eastgate Best Buy, 650 Eastgate S Dr
- **Time:** 9:30 am
- **Rest Stop** at the Marathon Station, West Union, Ohio on the way
- **Special Instructions:** Shoes that can get moist, dusty or muddy are advised for close orchid examination or photography. Long pants tucked into socks are best for hikers.
- Note: there is **No Cellphone Service** in the Lynx Preserve and much of the surrounding area
- **Lunch:** Bring a packed lunch and water. Food may also be available at the Shawnee Lodge or in West Union.
- **Questions?** Call Ann, 513 470-450





## April Service Day

Teresa Huesman

On April 13 a small group of NOPES members (Shirley Heyob, Heidi Fassler, Ned Keller, and Teresa Huesman) joined a group of Valley View members to clear an area of honeysuckle, pear trees and other invasive plants that were found. The weather was perfect for some good outdoor fun!



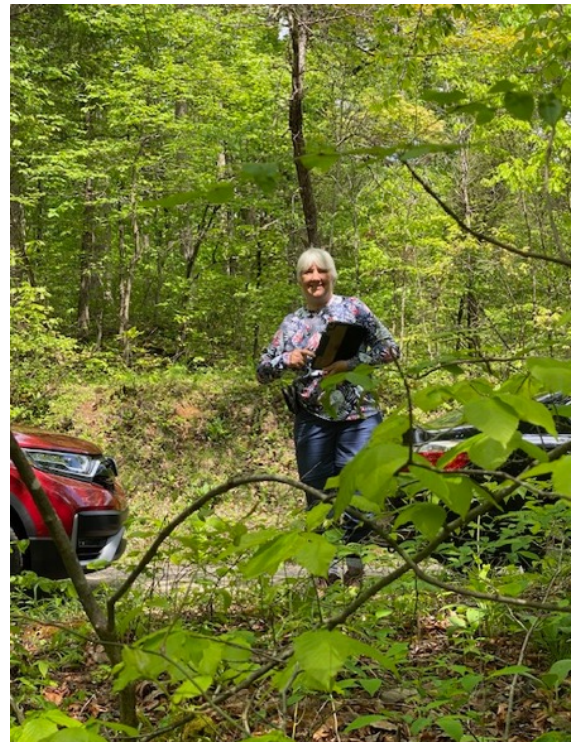


## Adams County Hike

Teresa Huesman

One of our successful hikes this summer was our first hike to Davis Memorial State Nature Preserve, Johnson Woods State Nature Preserve, and Edge of Appalachia Wilderness Trail. The orchids were early, but with multiple locations we were able to see some nice plants. We were fortunate to have Dan Boone with us, which is always a treat, and he is very knowledgeable about plants and trees!

While looking for pictures, I noticed how *Cypripedium pubescens* has different forms and different colors of sepals. We also found some new locations.







*Galearis spectabilis)*



*Cypripedium acaule*



*Cypripedium pubescens* 4 photos







## The 2024 Native Orchid Blooming Season (through June)

Jun Lao

This year has been a weird year for native plants, including native orchids. With the La Nina weather phenomenon in winter, we had relatively warm temperatures for the Midwest and Northeast, and a quick warm-up in Spring. This has led to native orchids blooming 10-14 days ahead of schedule, throwing planned hikes off kilter as the orchids were done blooming or were on their way out when the hikes were scheduled. Some orchids did well with the early mild temperatures, while others were still recovering from the extreme cold of the previous winter, followed by a month-long drought in late spring last year.

Spring Coralroot (*Corallorhiza wisteriana*) in peak bloom in a hiking trail in southeast Indiana third week of April. (at right)





The Pink Lady's Slippers (*Cypripedium acaule*) in this nature preserve in Adams County, Ohio, bloomed early and had a respectable showing; but only had one alba form this year (vs. two the previous two years)



The Large Yellow Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescens*) had also started blooming by the third week of April.

There were Showy Orchis (*Galearis spectabilis*) plants blooming along the trails as well (*below*)





One of the areas in Shawnee State Forest continued to amaze with a few very nice clumps of Pink Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*) and a few scattered Yellow Lady's Slippers (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescens*).



We were pleased that the white form (not alba, as seen with the brown, not green sepals) of the Pink Lady's Slipper had survived the usual brush cutting that was done in the area ahead of a road event that usually happens there in spring.



We also noticed that some of the spring-blooming native orchids needed time to recover from last year's cold winter and spring drought. We had no blooms of Pink Lady's Slippers and only one Showy Orchis (and no Large Whorled Pogonia) in one hillside habitat of Shawnee State Forest, and we had only had one or two Northern Tubercled Orchids bloom in a bog in central Ohio.





The only blooming Northern Tubercled Orchid (*Platanthera flava*) in a nature preserve bog in north central Ohio.



Early May saw the (early) peak bloom of the White Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium candidum*) and its hybrids (*Cypripedium x andrewsii*) with the Small Northern Yellow Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *makasin*), which has not been seen in this northwest Ohio nature preserve for a number of years.

Since the plants are in a hybrid swarm, it is quite hard to figure out which are the true White Lady's Slippers, as there has been so much hybridizing and back-crossing among the plants, that in this specific area, DNA analysis would likely be the only way to be sure which ones are pure White Lady's Slipper and which ones are hybrids/back-crosses. Sometimes you'll see what looks like a White Lady's Slipper flower, but it is on a tall plant that looks more like a Yellow Lady's Slipper.

Possible White Lady's Slipper Orchid (right) is a suspected back-cross (*above*) as the plant is quite tall and looked more like Yellow Lady's Slipper.





Likely a hybrid Andrew's Lady's Slipper (*below*) as it had more of a yellowish pouch, and the plant is tall, looking more like a Yellow Lady's Slipper.



Another likely hybrid, as seen by the dark sepals:



Mid-May is usually when the Kentucky Lady's Slippers (*Cypripedium kentuckiense*) would *start* to bloom south of the Ohio river. This year, they had already peaked mid-May. There were about 17 plants in bloom.

Some of the Kentucky Lady's Slippers had ivory pouches, while some had more of a buttery yellow pouch.





We also saw a Lily-leaved Twayblade (*Liparis lillifolia*) blooming in the area. Was told that one was also in bloom last year.



One area of concern this year was a park near Dayton, Ohio, where we would normally see a number of Lily-leaved Twayblades (*Liparis lillifolia*). This year, there weren't a lot of them; but we're thankful that the patch of the rare green-flowering form (*Liparis lillifolia* var *viridiflora*) had two blooming plants. A few inches away were five blooming plants of the regular variety.

In peak bloom the third week of May, they were ahead of their usual schedule (around Memorial Day), like the other native wildflowers and orchids.





Toward the end of May, a call from the Nature Center in this wildlife recreation area in south Michigan confirmed the Dragon's Mouth Orchid and the Small Northern Yellow Lady's Slippers were in bloom (though already past peak and fading).



Dragon's Mouth Orchid (*Arethusa bulbosa*) flower next to a Purple Pitcher Plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*).



One Small Northern Yellow Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *makasin*) that was still in prime bloom – all the others were fading or wilted.

Over at Cedar Bog Nature Preserve, the Showy Lady's Slippers (*Cypripedium reginae*) were at peak bloom by the end of May, ahead of schedule.





By mid-June, there were two Lesser Purple Fringed Orchids (*Platanthera psycodes*) in bloom near the boardwalk. The large specimen plant that was several feet away from the boardwalk and next to the base of the tree was not in bloom, and may have lived out its lifespan, as it was also not seen last year.



Early June meant a trip to a northern Ohio nature preserve to check on their population of Pad-leaf Orchids (*Platanthera orbiculata*). This year would be somewhat of a normal year for them, with five blooming plants and most of the other plants not blooming. They thrive in acidic environments, and they don't have much competition where they are, as most of the ground is covered with pine needles. Given not a lot of vegetation on the ground, you can easily pick out the large pad leaves of the orchid.



Mid-June was also when the Large Purple Fringed Orchids (*Platanthera grandiflora*) were in bloom in the mountains of central West Virginia. They would normally be in peak bloom toward the third week of June. They had a very good year this year as there were so many in bloom, visible from the roadsides. In one special spot, there were some pale pink, almost white, color forms as well.





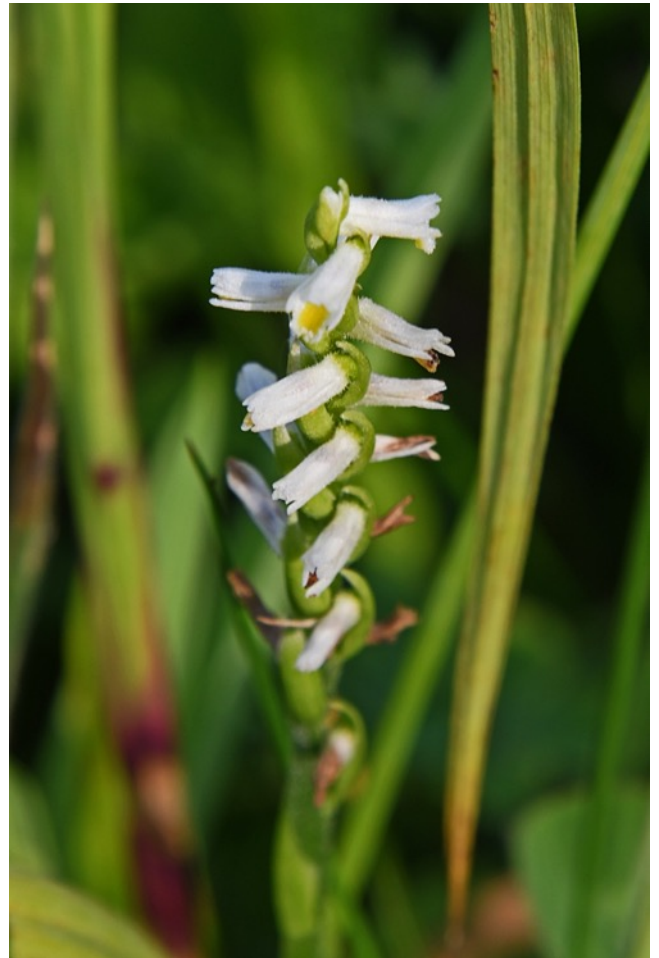


A visit to the ranger station always impresses me as there are a large number of Northern Tuber-cled Orchids (*Platanthera flava*) blooming in direct sunlight together with other plants such as Black-eyed Susans. Being at higher elevation, the presence of morning dew helps this “bog” orchid thrive in an area that is not a bog.





Also, on a mowed corner between roads, there were small Shining Ladies' Tresses (*Spiranthes lucida*) blooming in direct sunlight, with the area getting wet with rain and morning dew.



Normally blooming the second half of June, the Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*) were in peak bloom the second week of June in this wet prairie in west central Ohio. Regularly trimming the surrounding tall brush has helped these endangered plants thrive.

## **ONAPA Annual Meeting (Ohio Natural Areas and Preserves Association) September 14**

Jeanne Rhinehart

Angela Carter and I attended the Annual Meeting. Several of our members have worked on invasive control at Cranberry Bog, Cedar Bog and in an area containing the Eastern Prairie Fringe Orchids with ONAPA. ONAPA is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 nonprofit to “bring together organizations and





individuals to provide technical expertise, and volunteers to help monitor and maintain Ohio's finest remaining natural areas.

Jeff Davis was the main speaker covering his work with the Ohio Division of Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service with emphasis on the Cave Salamander, Eastern Massasauga, Eastern Spadefoot and the Smooth Greensnake.



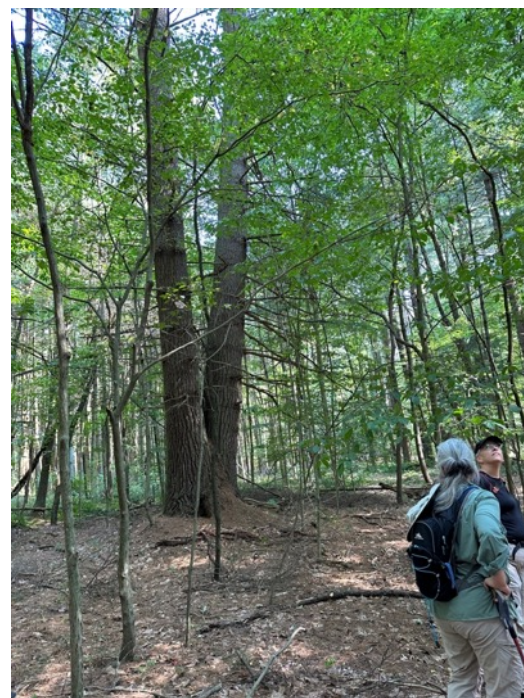
In addition to the annual business reports, progress at Cedar Bog and the many other works with various organizations and preserves were covered. This included numerous service days partnered with various organization

Several of the interns then spoke of their activities interning with ONAPA and the job opportunities their work with ONAPA has provided

The meeting was followed by a choice of field trips.

We went to Annette McCormick's property to see the white pine forest they have protected.

We also checked out Jackson Bog which was another of the fieldtrips offered.



Becoming a member, volunteering with habitat improvement service days, and donating helps to promote the natural areas in our state. and allows interns to have a successful transition into positions in conservation fields.



## An Orchid for All Seasons, *Goodyera pubescens*

Ken Mettler

In mid-winter. The sky is grey, and the ground is mostly brown. So, what's a native orchid lover to do in such a dispiriting season? Go outside and look at orchids! In Ohio we have three species that are still visible during the winter. Of these, the Downy Rattlesnake Plantain, *Goodyera pubescens*, is the most abundant, and is our only evergreen species.



As one of the so-called “jewel orchids”, the foliage is the real attraction for this plant. It forms small rosettes, two to five inches (5-13 cm) in diameter, of up to about ten leaves on or near the ground. The oblong-elliptic leaves are each up to three inches (7.5 cm) long, and about half as wide. The leaves are a cool, bluish green with a silvery white stripe down the center of the leaf and are reticulated with silvery white on the veins. On a couple occasions, I have found plants that have about double the amount of silver in the leaf as the usual form.





In July, an upright inflorescence emerges 4-20 inches (10-50 cm) densely covered with small, cup-shaped white flowers. The backs of the sepals are heavily covered with short hairs, hence the species name, *pubescens*. In southeast Ohio, they are usually in bloom from about mid-July through mid-August.





These plants like to grow in mesic (not too wet, not too dry) woods, and are found throughout the eastern half of Ohio. It is probably the most common orchid in the Hocking Hills region, and there are places where they are so thick that it's difficult to walk without stepping on them. Being evergreen allows them to survive in fairly low light environments. Since they are visible all year, the easiest way to find them is to look for them



in the winter, when there aren't as many "green things" to block your view. A few other plants commonly seen with them are spotted wintergreen (*Chimaphila maculata*), Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), and running ground cedar (*Diphasiastrum digitatum*). Running ground cedar is a stoloniferous club moss that I've found makes great cut greenery to fill in spaces in orchid exhibits.



In winter when we're all stuck at home most of the time, once your tropical orchids are taken care of, get outside and look around. There are a surprising number of plants that are still in leaf and growing at this time of year. And be sure to look for our native jewel orchid in the woods of eastern Ohio.