

Lower Howard's Creek Nature & Heritage Preserve 2008 Spring Hiking Schedule



The winter of 2008 will be remembered as the “muddy winter” for the cold, gray, wet weather we’ve endured to get through this weary season. Spring is almost upon us, so it’s time to plan to get back outdoors and enjoy the promise of brighter days. The Preserve is filled with a variety of wildflowers, which will begin blooming by early March, and reveal a flush of new species every week through May.

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 will be made 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 20, 4:30 p.m. – Thompson Ridge Settlement: Join us on a hike this first day of Spring. This small settlement was populated until the mid-20th century. While the houses have disappeared, the forsythia, vinca, yucca and daffodils that the inhabitants planted are still very much present, and should be blooming. We will also visit some of the old limestone quarries that these people worked in, and will talk about other pioneer entrepreneurs who lived here over 200 years ago. Moderately strenuous hike of about 2 1/2 hours.

March 29, 9:00 a.m. – Heirloom daffodils and early spring wildflowers: Dr. Bill Crankshaw will lead this hike, which will feature abandoned homesites throughout the Preserve. The old homesteads will contain some heirloom varieties of daffodils, and between sites the early wildflowers should be showing their colors. Steep slopes will be traversed and this is one of the more strenuous hikes, so be prepared to spend at least 3 hours with us.

April 2, 5:00 p.m. – Mid-week wildflower hike: Wednesday hikes have been well-attended, so we will be having several during the Spring. Since we start late in the afternoon, the hike will only be about 2 hours in length, but should allow plenty of time for wildflower viewing.

April 5, 10 a.m. – Archaeology tour: Tanya Faberson, PhD, RPA, will lead this very interesting hike. The archaeology firm of Cultural Resource Analysts recently performed a Phase 1 archaeological survey of the entire Preserve. Dr. Faberson will show hikers some of the sites they discovered during the Fall of 2006. Moderately strenuous hike with multiple creek crossings. Hike will be about 3 hours long.

April 9, 9 a.m. – Mid-week morning hike: Dr. Bill Crankshaw will lead this midweek morning hike for serious flower seekers. This should be a grand tour of the main valley of the Preserve. Moderately strenuous hike of about 3 hours.

April 12, 10 a.m. – Wildflowers Galore: This weekend is usually the peak for all the blue flowers in the creek valley. Early blue phlox, Virginia Bluebells, and Larkspur cover the valley floor, along with a host of others. This is our most leisurely stroll through the Preserve because we have to stop so often for photographing the riot of colors. Hike is about 3 hours.

April 16, 10 a.m. – Mid-week wildflower hike: Looking for an excuse to play hooky from work? Take this opportunity to look for wildflowers and migratory birds. Moderately strenuous hike lasting about 3 hours.

April 19, 9 a.m. – Wildflower hike: The days will be getting longer and the vegetation will be closing in the forest canopy. Come see which wildflowers are blooming now and enjoy the change to the Preserve as the trees begin providing their summer shade. Dr. Bill Crankshaw will lead this hike. Moderately strenuous hike lasting about 3 hours.

April 26, 10 a.m. – Last wildflower hike: Don't miss this last wildflower hike of the Spring. Preserve manager Clare Sipple will lead the hike. Moderately strenuous hike lasting about 3 hours.

For more information about Lower Howard's Creek Nature and Heritage Preserve go to www.lowerhowardscreek.org.