



LOWER HOWARD'S CREEK NATURE AND HERITAGE PRESERVE 2009 FALL HIKES/EVENTS -- PART 2

There were several hikes earlier this fall; if you missed them or just can't wait to come back this is your chance! The leaves are beginning to drop in the Lower Howard's Creek Valley, and cooler temperatures encourage us to get out and enjoy the beauty of Fall. Following are additional schedule of events planned for Autumn 2009. All hikes will start at the Preserve's main entrance/parking lot on Athens-Boonesboro Road unless otherwise noted.

Group size is limited so 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 are a possibility on all hikes 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.

October 25 - 2 p.m. Fall Colors: Fall colors should be peaking this weekend. This is a Sunday hike, so we will leave a bit later than on our Saturday hikes. Weather and creek level permitting, we'll head a bit further upstream than we normally do to check out the leaf color on the Preserve's *Viburnum molle* and witchhazel population. 3 hours, moderately strenuous.

October 31 - 10 a.m. Halloween: As one would imagine, the LHC valley has accumulated its fair share of ghost stories through the 200+ years of its occupation. Today's hike will take visitors through the Thompson Ridge settlement and several old cemeteries. Your guide will polish up her story telling skills to recount true hair-raising tales that occurred there during the last two centuries. 3 hours, moderately strenuous.

November 7 - 10 a.m. Trail Workday: Volunteer trail repair workshop for members and those that want to help. A recently acquired Transportation Enhancement grant will allow us to improve 2miles of trails within the Preserve. We need help scouting out and flagging the route of the old Salt Springs trace. Bring your gloves and hand-tools such as machetes, grubbing hoes, axes and loppers. We'll meet at Hall's on the River and work our way upstream past Kitt's hole. There's not a lot of work to do, but it will be a chance for the Friends of Lower Howard's Creek to orient themselves to the interesting features

on the lower end of the Preserve. Plan on spending about 3 hours for this outing, with opportunity for longer hike when the trail work is finished. Not a member of the Friends' group? Use this opportunity to become one.

November 14 - 9 a.m. Plant Ecology: Bill Crankshaw is a retired PhD forest ecologist who offers a unique perspective on the ecological relationships between the different areas within the LHC Preserve. Join Bill for a hike that will open your eyes to the diversity of plants within the Preserve. Main entrance. 3 hours, moderately strenuous.

December 5 – 10 a.m. Quarry tour: CANCELLED – SEE DECEMBER 13

December 12 – 9 a.m. Preserve Topography: Dr. Bill Crankshaw will also lead this hike, starting at the Main Entrance. Most of the leaves should be off the trees by this date, so Dr. Crankshaw's emphasis will be on the topography rather than the plants. Expect some creek crossings as you work your way upstream past the Martin dam site to one of our least visited areas within the Preserve. 3 hours, moderately strenuous.

December 13 – 10 a.m. Quarry tour: This tour is not for the faint-hearted! We will meet at the Main Entrance and work our way through several quarries scattered throughout the Preserve, ending the tour at Hall's on the River. Length of hike is 4 hours, with multiple creek crossings.

Staff is available for private tours during the week, or on weekend days when public tours aren't scheduled. Phone number of the office is (859) 744-4888.