

FLOW

Published By

FLOW Board of Directors
 Laura Shinn, President
 Rich Wissler, Vice President
 David White, Treasurer
 Amy Dutt, Secretary
 Erin Miller
 Joe Tribble
 Ted Miller
 Laura Fay

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Heather Dean, Watershed Coordinator

Newsletter Layout

Ellie Nowels, Centipede Graphics

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3528 N. High St., Suite F
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 (614) 267-3386
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 www.olentangywatershed.org

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Vernal Pools

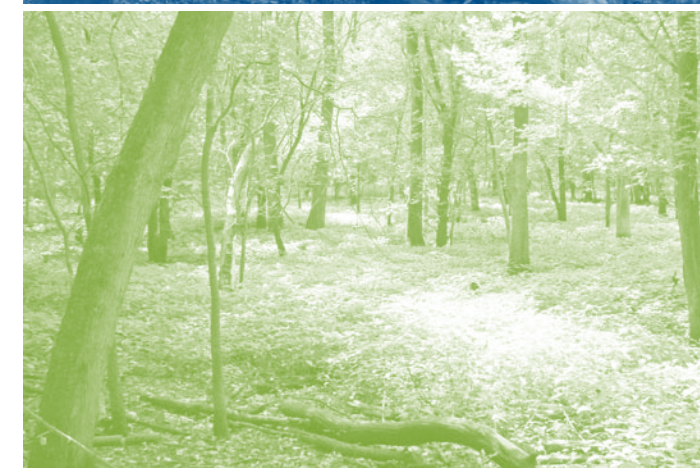
By Joe Brehm, FLOW Intern

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According to the Whetstone Prairie Project, 85% of Ohio's wetlands were vernal pools before European settlement. After a loss of up to 90% of Ohio's wetlands, there are only a few left in the Lower Olentangy Watershed. Vernal pools exist at Stratford Ecological Center, Highbanks Metro Park, Rush Run Preserve, and the Whetstone Prairie.

Vernal pools are amazingly variable and complex, especially when considering their relatively small size and ephemeral existence. The foundation for this complexity is simple: leaves. The leaves that fall each year into the vernal pools (which may be only dry depressions by autumn) are broken down by bacteria, insects, and other small creatures, forming the first links of the food chain, supplemented by algal growth. These simple building blocks help support an incredible diversity of organisms.

The surrounding forest not only provides a food source for life in the pools; it also provides cover. The many amphibians that rely on ephemeral wetlands for feeding and/or breeding also rely on a buffer of up to 200 meters of forest to feed, breed, or find cover. A study by Nancy Karraker published in 2008 showed that the egg masses of wood frogs and spotted salamanders were twice as large in pools in intact forest compared



Above: Vernal pool in spring and summer. Photos by David Celebrezze.

with those in pools along roadsides in the Adirondack Mountains of New York. This was due in part due to road runoff contaminated with deicing salts. These findings show the importance of high quality habitat buffers.

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- Individual \$25
 Family \$40
 Supporting \$50
 River Steward \$100
 Business Basic \$175
 Bronze \$200
 Silver \$300
 Gold \$500
 Sustaining \$1,000

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Fill in the following:

- New Member
 Renewal
 Gift

Name(s):

Organization/Business:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email:

By providing your email, you will save resources and stay up-to-date on news and events.

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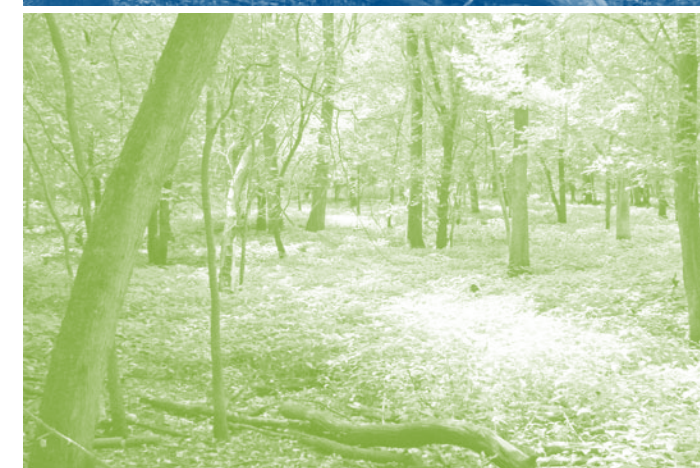
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<input type="checkbox"/> River Steward	\$100	Name(s):
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Basic	\$175	Organization/Business:
<input type="checkbox"/> Bronze	\$200	Address:
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