

# Conservator

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LAND CONSERVANCY OF HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO / JANUARY 2011

## Announcing the David Styer Preserve—

## A NATURAL TREASURE IN WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP

**T**he David Styer Preserve—an 11-acre forest dominated by towering oaks, maples and poplars—has been donated to the Land Conservancy to permanently protect and steward.

Surrounded by residential homesites in a developing neighborhood, the woodland Preserve is located on Lawrenceburg Rd. in rural Whitewater Twp. in western Hamilton County.

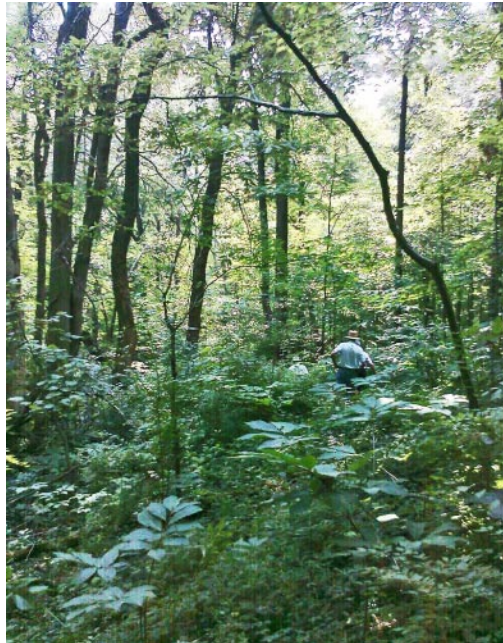
### A lasting legacy

The conservation-minded donor is Dr. David Styer, who owned and cared for the land since the early 1980s. He transferred title to the Land Conservancy in September 2010.

Donating land worthy of preservation is one of the finest legacies a person can leave to future generations, and a testament to David's conservation ethic.

The Nature Conservancy/Ohio referred this gift to the Land Conservancy. Josh E. Knights, Director of TNC/Ohio, commented: "David's generosity will ensure that this natural treasure—a looking glass to a time when our forests contained a diversity of species and large trees—will be available for future generations to study and be inspired by."

A noted field naturalist and wildlife observer, David is one of the founders in 1985 of Oxbow, Inc., the land trust that protects the wetlands at the confluence of the Ohio and Great Miami rivers. Known for his birdwatching experience, David is the author



*Pawpaws and ferns carpet the forest floor*

of *Birds of the Oxbow* published in 1993, an historic account of the nationally-recognized wildlife refuge.

### Bird sanctuary and wildlife habitat

The Preserve is an 11-acre rectangle at the end of a wooded ridge, a stone's throw west of the Whitewater River. While the area has some steep slopes, the majority of the property is located on a unique plateau about 100 ft. above the river valley.

The Preserve's understory provides

an ideal bird sanctuary and habitat for wildlife. Native wildflowers and ferns thrive in the rich loamy soil.

### Nature's work in progress

The hidden jewel of the property is an old-growth forest fragment on the upland area on the western end of the property. There the land slopes toward a stream flowing east to the Whitewater River.

The Preserve was once part of a larger tract that was used as pasture land. Natural reforestation has covered much of the site providing significant tree canopy. Because of the canopy, there is little intrusion by invasive species.

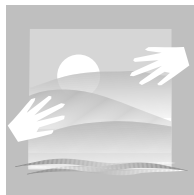
### Abundant flora and fauna

During David's long ownership of the land, his documentation of botanicals (60 detailed descriptive entries) and a checklist of birds observed (102) is being used as a baseline of the land's present condition. "... Such birds as Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireos, Kentucky Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak have nested on the property," David noted in his observations.

TNC/Ohio acknowledged state-listed plants on the property including Prairie Trillium, Fern-leaved Phacelia, and Wister's Coral-root Orchid growing nearby.

### Keeping records over time

For Land Conservancy records, a descriptive snapshot of the Preserve at the time of David's gift—containing maps, photographs and descriptions for ongoing reference—has been prepared, and will be updated regularly.



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OF HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO**

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