



environmental

Center at Kenyon College

family trees

Most of us have fond childhood memories of time spent playing in and around trees. If we were lucky, we lived near a large woods where we could make trails, play Little Red Riding Hood, or build tree forts. Many of us had yards with several large trees, which could be used for a tire swing, for second base, or for shady summer naps.

Trees are an important part of a child's world. They're sturdy companions when children pick apples, discover a bird's nest, or jump in a pile of leaves. Trees are also an important part of environmental education. Almost every school, rural, suburban, or urban, has trees growing on the grounds or nearby. Learning about trees helps connect children to our natural world, introducing them to our environment and inspiring them to learn more about our planet.

The next time you visit the BFEC, please pick up a copy of our new tree identification pamphlet and self-guided walking tour.

In addition to providing leaf and bark characteristics for nineteen tree species found at the BFEC, the pamphlet leads you on a tree tour, starting near the turtle gardens, heading along the perimeter of the prairie and into the woods, and concluding at the pine plantation. We invite the community to expand our tree list by calling our attention to trees on the center's grounds that are not mentioned in the pamphlet. Anyone who documents a new tree will receive a gift and a big thank-you from the BFEC staff.

Additional information about Ohio's trees can be found at the BFEC Web site. Go to the College site, www.kenyon.edu, click on Community, and follow the links to the BFEC.

See the inside of this newsletter for other excellent Web sites about trees and children.

Inside...

FALL MIGRATION
JOIN THE BROWN
NEW MANAGERS

▶ JAPANESE HONEYSUCKLE

cedar waxwings and

FALL MIGRATION...

The coming of fall marks more than the return of students to Kenyon. SUVs and minivans are not the only things flocking down Route 229.

The changing of the leaves and the dropping of summer temperatures signify the start of the fall migration. For whatever reason, the fall migration has always been more amazing to me than the same phenomenon in spring. Perhaps it's because August and September represent beginnings, or maybe it's simply

that the fall migration tends to attract a different character list of birds than the spring migration does. Either way, my return to Kenyon in the fall always included several trips with my binoculars down to the environmental center and Kokosing Gap trail.

The falling temperatures remind the birds that summer is over, the breeding season is past, and it's once again time to head south. The fall is a time when lots of first-year birds will come through the Kokosing valley, and warblers, who have lost their bright, distinguishing colors and patterns, are now

bland and similar to one another, making identification difficult even for the best birders. No longer trying to woo a mate, male warblers will lose their bright yellows, greens

and chestnuts, molting into a common, dull yellow, lacking much of what makes them unique in the spring and summer.

To me, the fall migration in Gambier was not about the one or two rarities, like the ruby crowned kinglet or the rose breasted grosbeak, that can be seen. Nor was it about the chance of seeing a summer tanager, one of the most magnificent and striking birds (in any season) to appear in these hills and valleys. No, for me, fall migration was about seeing the hordes of cedar waxwings that make their way into the Kokosing valley.

From a distance, waxwings may appear to be plain brown birds, too small for a robin, too large

for a warbler. But their subtle marks of beauty make

them a very attractive and interesting bird to see.

They combine attitude—

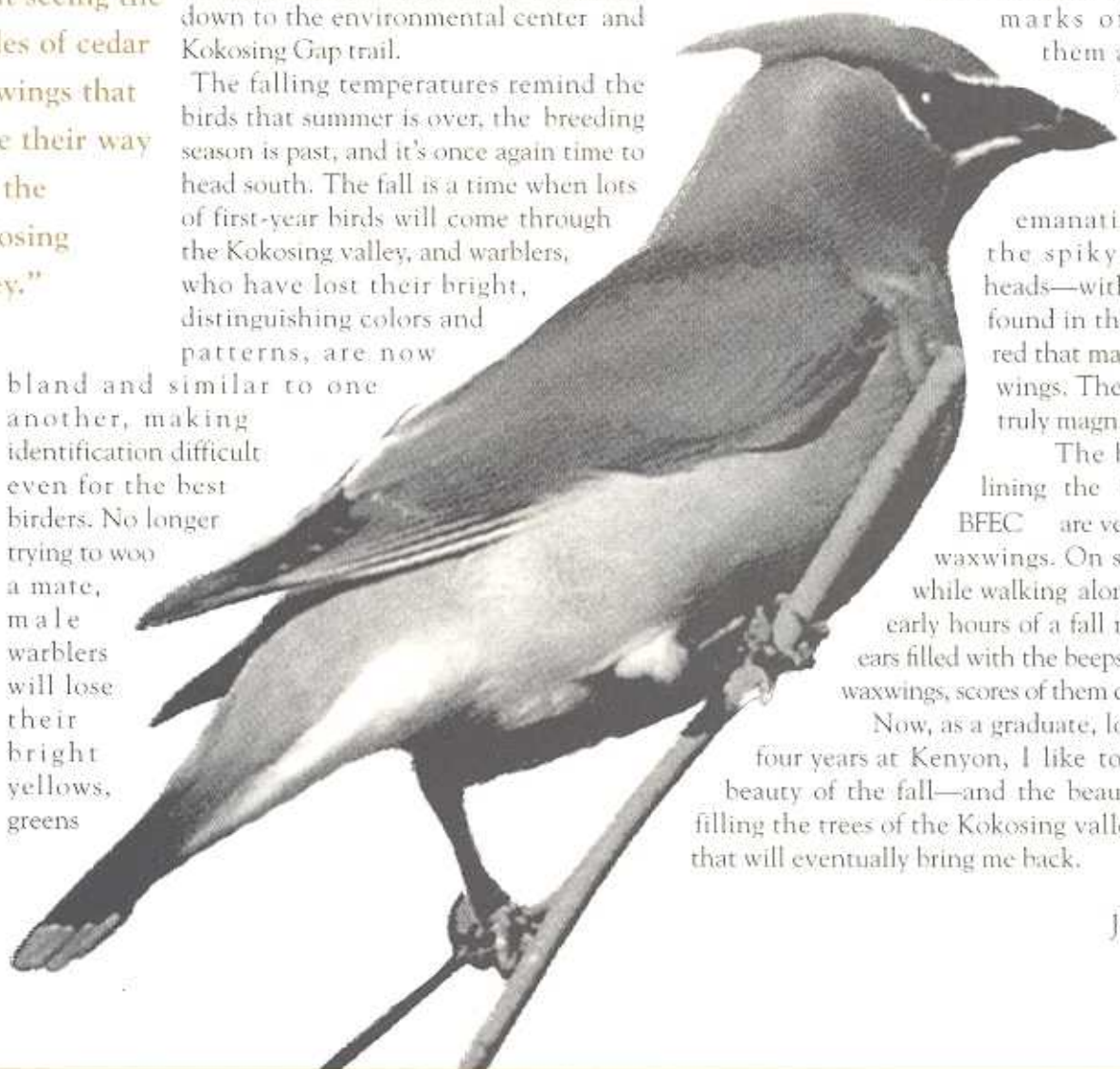
emanating perhaps from the spiky crest on their heads—with delicate color, found in the bold yellow and red that mark the tips of their wings. The cedar waxwing is truly magnificent.

The berry-filled trees lining the fields around the BFEC are very attractive to the waxwings. On several occasions, while walking along the trail in the early hours of a fall morning, I had my ears filled with the beeps and chips of cedar waxwings, scores of them covering the trees.

Now, as a graduate, looking back at my four years at Kenyon, I like to think about the beauty of the fall—and the beauty of the wildlife filling the trees of the Kokosing valley. It's this beauty that will eventually bring me back.

Jon Philipsborn '03

"... fall migration was about seeing the hordes of cedar waxwings that make their way into the Kokosing valley."



exploring tree
and tree identification

VIRTUAL VALLEY

environmental issues
on the world wide web

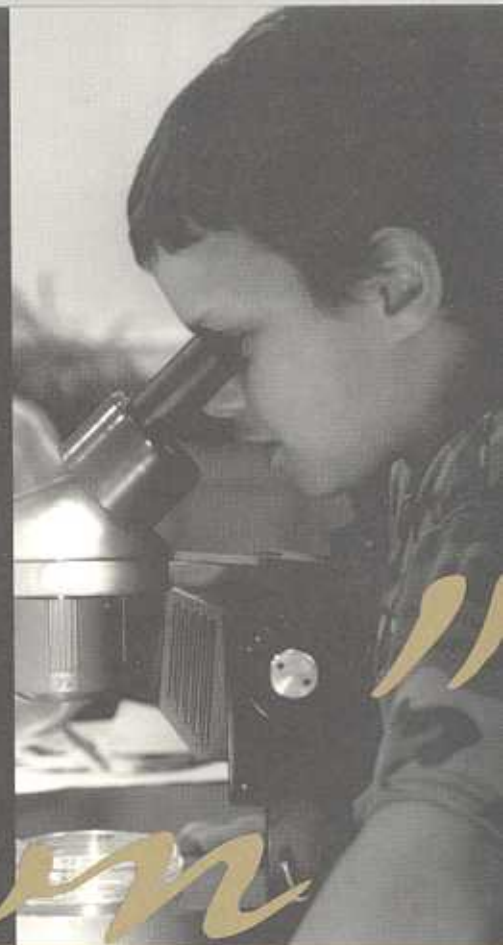
at the BFEC

BE GREEN,

join
THE
"brown

The BFEC has always depended on membership donations to support its array of activities. This year, in addition to our regular community programming, we are establishing a microscope fund to replace the old "dinosaurs" that we currently use when schoolchildren visit the center on field trips.

Think of your membership donation as an investment in inspiration: by giving to the BFEC, you are nurturing the next generation of naturalists and nature lovers in Knox County. We appreciate your help!



The bitter truth about

JAPANESE HONEYSUCKLE...

Japanese honeysuckle attacks a diverse range of habitats. It can be found in fields, forest edges, and disturbed woods.

Though often admired for its fragrant smell in early summer, *Lonicera japonica*—commonly called Japanese honeysuckle—is a serious threat to many native Ohio species. A perennial woody vine, it can be distinguished from native honeysuckle by its upper leaf pattern and berries. Japanese honeysuckle's top leaf pairs are separate and form black berries, while native species have fused leaves and produce red and orange berries.

Japanese honeysuckle attacks a diverse range of habitats. It can be found in fields, forest edges, and disturbed woods. It is an aggressive vine that outcompetes both above and below ground. Being semi-evergreen, it also grows during the milder part of winter when other species are dormant. Once the vine establishes itself in an area, it forms a thick canopy that causes the native undergrowth to collapse and die under its weight. This results in a less diverse woodland understory, which leaves the area open and more susceptible to other invasive species, such as kudzu and multiflora rose.

This problem plant is widespread in Central Ohio. The BFEC woods have an extensive honeysuckle infestation. If your property has a problem as well, check with the local conservation district or garden center for tips on control and eradication.

-Rebecca Chamberlin

check out the following links:

www.plt.org Project Learning Tree (resources for educators)

www.americanforests.org American Forests Organization

www.oplin.lib.oh.us/products/tree What Tree Is It?

www.dnr.state.oh.us/forestry/Education/ohiotrees/treesindex.htm Division of Forestry, Ohio Department of Natural Resources

NEW MANAGERS

This year's BFEC student managers are George Herrity '04, Jesse Lasky '04, and Kirsten Bierlein '04 (shown below, left to right). "The three of us have tremendous energy for the center, and it promises to be an exciting and productive year," says Bierlein, a religious-studies major from Washington, D.C. Herrity and Lasky are both biology majors. Both come from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



FALL 2003

nature

SERIES

All programs meet at the BFEC education center on Laymon Road unless otherwise specified. For programs requiring registration, or if you have questions, call the BFEC office at 740-427-5050.

Community Programs

Saturday, October 4, 9:00 a.m.

"Walk the Gambier Trail," and enjoy some new scenery! Gather in front of the Kenyon Bookstore for a pleasant morning hike.

Sunday, October 19, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

"Fall Nature Walk," with Jordan Professor of Environmental Science and Biology Ray Heithaus. Explore the BFEC trails, learn about our natural environment, and enjoy the beauty of the changing seasons. Call to register.

Friday, October 31, 8:30-9:30 p.m.

"Fall Sky," with Associate Professor of English Tim Shutt. Admire the season's constellations as you listen to mythological stories about the stars. If the weather is cloudy, the event will have to be rescheduled.

Saturday, November 1, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

"Fall Open House at the BFEC." What could be better than a fall day outdoors at the BFEC? Stroll the gardens, view our photography show, and enjoy fresh-pressed cider.

Saturday, November 8, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

"Volunteer Work Day: Putting the Gardens to Bed." Learn how to prepare vegetable and flower gardens for the winter. Bring clippers, rakes, and a friend. Snacks are on us! Call to register.

Morning bird-watching walks

Keep an eye on the fall bird migration, and learn which birds will stay for the winter. Every Wednesday morning from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m., and on the last Saturdays of September, October, and November at the same time, student manager Jesse Lasky and bird enthusiast Tim Shutt will lead birding walks. Meet at the BFEC farmhouse parking lot.

Children's Programs

Saturday, October 18, 12:00 noon-1:30 p.m.

"Imprints of Nature," with BFEC student manager Kirsten Bierlein. We'll do cyanotype imprinting of objects found in nature. \$5.00 materials fee. Call to register.

Saturday, October 25, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

"Haunted Campfire," with the BFEC student managers. Join us for pumpkin painting, roasted marshmallows, and stories around the campfire. \$5.00 materials fee. Call to register.



Thank You

While Kenyon College has supported the BFEC since the center's inception and will continue to do so, it is largely through the generous work of others—students, community members, visitors, and benevolent sponsors—that the BFEC has been able to grow. These individuals help the center through financial donations, volunteer contributions of time and energy, and gifts that make someone's job at the BFEC easier. The resources they provide are critical to our growth. We are indebted to the following individuals and businesses that donated time, materials, and funding over the past several months. If you would like to contribute a gift or volunteer to help with a project, please call the BFEC at 740-427-5050.

Anders Johnson
Nikki Chamberlin
Elaine Mackey
Rick Yorde
Kenyon College Craft Center
Windy Hill Nursery

Nature's Keepers Summer Camp

Joe Barber
Dianne Barcus
Harold Bower
Jim Gibson
Ken Hammontree
Al Helser
Ann Laudeman
Michael Lee
Eugene Robinson
Florence Schermer
Susan Rutter and Janet Weekly of Longaberger Baskets
Dale and Judy Van Winkle
Deborah Yorde and The Owl Creek Fiber Guild

The BFEC extends a heartfelt thank you to all the young volunteers that helped us out as counselors and junior counselors.

Donations:
Epsilon Sigma Alpha Sorority
Lisa Bidlingmeyer
Judy Dobbins

Family
Robert and Patricia Hesse

Benefactor
Mr. and Mrs. William Stroud



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The Brown Family Environmental Center
at Kenyon College (BFEC) exists to create opportunities
for individual and collaborative study of organisms and habitats
of central Ohio... and to benefit the general public of Knox County through
environmental education and recreation consistent with its educational goals.