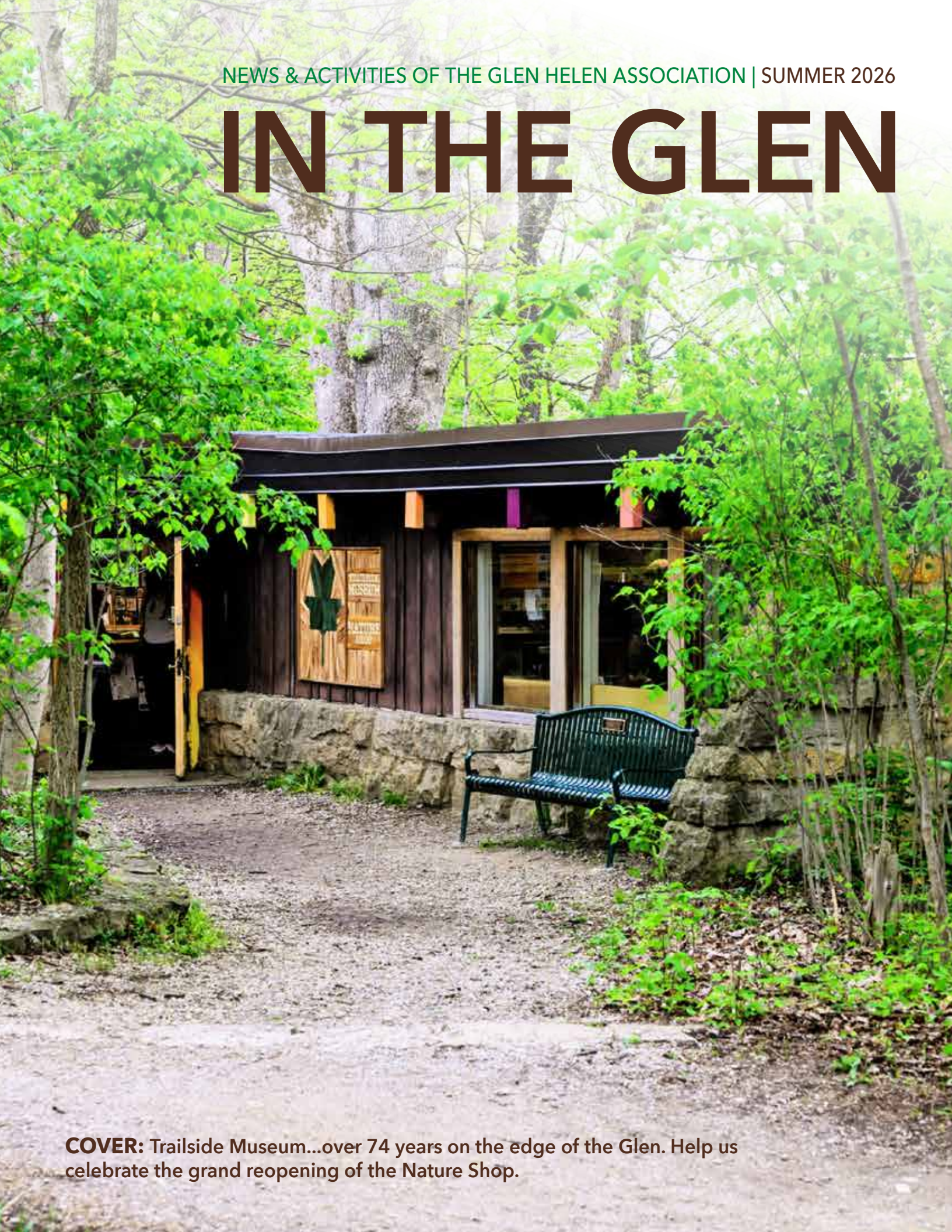


NEWS & ACTIVITIES OF THE GLEN HELEN ASSOCIATION | SUMMER 2026

IN THE GLEN



COVER: Trailside Museum...over 74 years on the edge of the Glen. Help us celebrate the grand reopening of the Nature Shop.



Photo: Kelsey Mazur

Glen Helen Nature Preserve

Trails are open daily, sunrise to sunset. All wildlife, vegetation, and natural features are protected. For general information: 937-769-1902
405 Corry Street, Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Mission

The mission of the Glen Helen Association is to steward and strengthen Glen Helen Nature Preserve for present and future generations, safeguard the ecological, historical, and geological resources within its bounds, and utilize the preserve to offer life-shaping environmental learning to our students and visitors.

Administrative Offices

405 Corry Street, 937-769-1902

Vernet Ecological Center

405 Corry Street
Monday-Friday 10am-4pm, Saturday-Sunday 1-4pm

Trailside Museum and Nature Shop

505 Corry Street, Thurs-Sun, 10am-4pm

Outdoor Education Center

Residential environmental education center for school groups and summer Eco-Camps.
1075 State Route 343, 937-767-7648

Raptor Center

Raptor education and rehabilitation center. Visitors are welcome to visit the center and see the resident birds. Summer hours 9am-7pm.
1075 State Route 343, 937-767-6656

Glen Helen Association Board of Trustees

Jill Allen, Bruce Bradtmiller, Ph.D. (treasurer/secretary), Kitt Cooper, Margaret Dunn, MD (president), Mitch George, Rick Hoffman (vice president), Ronald Kerans, Jeremy Main, Stephanie Noe, Yasmeen Soin, Paul Sampson, Liz Valenti, Nick Boutis (ex-officio)

Glen Helen Association Staff

Administration

Executive Director: Nick Boutis
Deputy Director: Kat Christen
Admin and Finance Coordinator: Becky McKinney
Development Manager: Tracey Tackett
Outreach Manager: Sarah Strong

Land Management

Senior Land Steward: Steve Strauss
Ranger: Susan Smith
Work Crew: Ally Brown, Wren Entler, Clare Grooms, Mark Junkerman, Sam Lewis, Marina Vernosky, River Walling

Outdoor Education Center

Director: Robyn Wright
Assistant Director: Amelia Lively
Partnerships and Marketing Manager: Kelsey Mazur
Education Manager: Kayla Lawyer

Kitchen Manager: Joretta Johnston
Kitchen Assistant: Sarah Blankemeyer
Kitchen and Facilities Assistant: John Mick
Lead Naturalists: Emily Foubert, Eileen Haney

Raptor Center

Director: Rebecca Jaramillo
Assistant: Christine Avery
Educator: Adrianna Burrows

Facility Rentals/Booking

Coordinator: Ashley Mason
Event Facilitators: Tevon Ademu-John, Shoshauna Craycraft, Caly Hawker

Maintenance

Supervisor: Shahkar Strolger
Assistant: Leah Duffy, Kyle Lewis
Parking Coordinator: Bill Mischler
Attendants: Jen Ater, John Baldasare, Emma Bennett, Emily Cook, Andy Graff, Patrick Harney, Melanie Muratore, Chris Muratore

Grinnell Mill

Manager: Susie Butler

In the Glen is published for Glen Helen Association members and friends

In the Glen Contributors

Editor: Sarah Strong; Contributors: Nick Boutis, Rebecca Jaramillo, Kelsey Mazur, Kara Peters, Sarah Strong, Robyn Wright; Design: Jennifer Perry

www.glenhelen.org



From the Director

CELEBRATING TWO DECADES AT THE GLEN



This letter marks an important personal milestone for me. I began serving as director of Glen Helen on June 1, 2006—twenty years ago! The occasion has me reflecting on all that we have been through over my two decades here.

Thanks to an extraordinary amount of hard work from a great number of staff and volunteers, multiple projects done in collaboration with other organizations, and the wonderful generosity of supporters, Glen Helen is a different and much stronger organization today.

Here are twenty highlights, for twenty years:

1. It required an act of the Ohio state legislature to establish our **Specialty License Plate** featuring a wonderful Charley Harper sapsucker image.
2. We started **Make it Count for the Birds**, an annual birdwatching marathon that raises funds for our land stewardship work. Since inception we have found 146 bird species in the preserve.
3. We navigated the **closure and reopening** of Antioch College, while maintaining our operations.
4. We established a **Legacy Society** to celebrate supporters who make planned gifts to the Glen, and have gratefully welcomed 40 members to date.
5. We ensured that Glen Helen would be forever protected from development by placing a series of **conservation easements** and environmental covenants on the preserve.
6. We started a **scholarship fund** to make it possible for economically disadvantaged kids to participate in the overnight programs at our Outdoor Education Center. Over 4,000 children have had a life-shaping week at the Glen thanks to this effort.
7. We acquired **Camp Greene** from the Girl Scouts of Western Ohio, and began to manage the 28-acre property as an integral part of Glen Helen.
8. We started **Whoo Cooks for You**, an annual dinner where the region's top restaurants prepare a feast for the benefit of the Raptor Center.
9. We acquired **Barbara and David Case Woods** from the Case Family, and began to manage the 47-acre property as an integral part of Glen Helen.
10. We acquired the **Sutton Farm** from the Village of Yellow Springs, and began to manage the 76-acre property as an integral part of Glen Helen.
11. At the height of the COVID pandemic, we **gained independence** from Antioch College as the Glen Helen Association took over ownership and operations of the preserve and its programs
12. We successfully completed the \$4.25M **Campaign to Secure the Future of Glen Helen**.
13. The number of **Glen Helen Association members** grew from 400 in 2006 to over 1,700 today.
14. Your support enabled us to grow our **staff numbers** from 8.5 in 2006 to 25.5 today.
15. We stewarded our **endowment funds**, in partnership with our local community foundations, growing them from \$1.5M in 2006 to \$7M today.
16. We made major strides removing non-native **invasive plant species**, clearing woody plants like honeysuckle from nearly half the preserve.
17. We built or replaced 39 **bridges and boardwalks** on Glen Helen trails, including major projects like the span over the Birch Creek Cascades, and the boardwalk atop the old Yellow Springs Creek dam.
18. We made **major renovations** to 15 buildings in the preserve, built a new classroom yurt at the Outdoor Education Center and built a new public restroom at State Route 343.
19. We demolished 12 **derelict structures** and restored the sites where they were located. Some of these were massive, including the former Antioch College coal-fired power plant.
20. Because we believe that everyone deserves a chance to develop a relationship with the environment, we worked to make the preserve more **accessible to all**, including ramps to our public buildings, updated parking areas, and an ADA trail.

I'm looking forward to accomplishing a lot more great things around the Glen!

Nick Boutis,
Executive Director, Glen Helen Association



Trailside Museum

A SENSE OF PLACE



Since its creation, the Trailside Museum has been a place of education and wonder. In the early days, when run by Antioch College students, it was a crucial starting point for visitors, offering insights into the history of the Glen and connecting them with the surrounding natural habitats. Imagined, planned and built in 1952 by Antioch students and Industrial Designer, Read Viemester, the museum is a historic, mid-century modern structure built out of repurposed materials. Such as the former lime kiln and other structures around the Glen (see back cover). One of the best features of their design is surely the bird viewing feeder station, active and bustling year-round with avian life. Bird-filled feeders hang across vast windows overlooking the many steps of the Inman Trail, taking you down into the depths of the Glen, right to the beaver dam and across the pond.

The Glen team and our amazing volunteers are thrilled to continue offering a place where we can

discover more about the life and features of Glen Helen. Today, interactive exhibits feature beaver pelts and facts, mammal furs, nature guides and local fossils. Visitors can meet our live ambassador turtles and tree frogs, watch how fast a sunfish can eat a red wiggler and so much more! We look forward to visiting with you at the oldest museum in Yellow Springs. We, at Glen Helen, hold the Trailside Museum as a renewed place of education and wonder for our local community and visitors alike.

Did you know the Nature Shop moved over to the Trailside Museum in 2024? Re-imagined this past winter, Sarah Strong's curated items are a delight: nature themed gift items and trail gear, puzzles, children's books, earrings, journals, kites and guides, plus new apparel! Of course, you can still buy Glen Helen hats, walking sticks and water bottles. You can also pick up pocket-sized bug spray or sunblock before your hike. **See you soon.** Article by Sarah Strong.



NATURE
SHOP


GRAND
REOPENING
June 6-7

Join us at the Glen Helen
Nature Shop from
10am-4pm.

Checkout our new
merchandise, plus visitors
can get a free wild bird
seed gift with a new
membership.*



*While supplies last



Glen Helen Nature Shop

INSIDE THE TRAILSIDE MUSEUM



New Outreach Manager

SARAH STRONG

Sarah comes to the Glen with a deep passion for the natural world. An educator and artist for over 30 years, she brings this knowledge with her as the new Outreach Manager of Glen Helen. Sarah truly loves the shared experience of witnessing and facilitating others' explorations and discoveries, deepening their understanding of themselves and our sacred earth. Serving Glen Helen's mission: *Preserving Nature, Shaping Lives* is exactly what Sarah is here to do.

“Being a liaison between our community and Glen Helen is an honor.”

If you have any questions about the Nature Shop, Trailside Museum, events or programs, volunteering or *In The Glen* magazine, please contact her via email: sstrong@glenhelen.org.





When Mother Nature Calls

HELEN'S STORY OF MOTHERHOOD



Icarus, the red-tailed hawk, at one year old, relaxing before teaching a program at the Raptor Center.

The Glen Helen Raptor Center rescues and rehabilitates birds of prey while also educating the public on the role of raptors in Ohio ecosystems. Rehabilitation and education overlap when a rehabilitation patient, against all measures, is determined to be unable to be released back into the wild and joins our educational cadre, or when an ambassador bird takes on the role of a parent to young raptors in need of care in our rehabilitation facility. These “foster parents” are competent and perform these responsibilities often, but in 2025 we found ourselves calling on a new mom who turned out to be just what we needed.

Helen, a female red-tailed hawk, came to the Raptor Center in 2011 with a wing injury which did not heal well enough for release. So Helen lives here at the center with her mate, Will. Although Helen displays nesting behaviors she has never had the chance to raise babies of her own. Since most red-tailed hawk

nestlings are able to be returned to their wild parents rather than raised at the center, she’s also never had the chance to foster babies. This was about to change! Last year we were called upon twice to help AEP mitigate nests on power poles. Allowing a nest to finish the season undisturbed or relocating the nest to a platform in a nearby tree is everyone’s first choice, however, neither option was possible in these two cases. We were called to step in. The first nest contained two red-tailed hawk eggs, which were placed in our incubator to carefully monitor until hatching. Only two days later, the second phone call came, this time for two tiny nestlings!

These two-and four-day-old babies were almost eighty feet up a very old tower which was coming down. Thankfully, wild raptors have very poor counting skills and as long as we match the ages of babies in another wild nest we can add an additional



Rent The Glen

FIVE UNIQUE SETTINGS TO CHOOSE FROM



Glen Helen has many rental facilities for hosting a variety of functions such as weddings, graduation parties, reunions, celebrations of life and business retreats.



Vernet Ecological Center



Camp Greene



Cedar Center Dormitory



Birch Manor



Outdoor Education Center Lodge

Vernet Ecological Center

With its spacious auditorium and beautiful natural stone patio, Vernet Ecological Center is the perfect rental space.

Camp Greene

This cozy 200-person capacity wooden lodge with two stone fireplaces and gorgeous outdoor spaces makes this the ideal private location for gatherings of all kinds.

Birch Manor

Birch Manor's historic brick 1931 mansion and surrounding tree lined lawns are a welcoming setting for weddings, receptions, and retreats.

Outdoor Education Center Lodge

Great windows to the forest make this oversized cafeteria style dining room the ideal spot for any retreat.

Cedar Center Dormitory

NOW AVAILABLE FOR WEEKEND OVERNIGHTS! With room for up to 40 guests, Cedar Center Dorm is the perfect option for large groups looking to reconnect with nature.



For rates, questions, or to schedule a tour, contact rentals@glenhelenassociation.org or 937-769-1902 x1101.





JUNE JULY AUGUST 2026

en Helen Program Calendar

JUNE

ALL SATURDAYS

Turtle Feeding

1:30-2pm

What does a box turtle eat? Drop in to find out as we feed our resident turtles, tree frogs and other native animal ambassadors. No registration required. All ages welcome. Program: Free. Parking: \$10, members free. Trailside Museum: 505 Corry St.



Golden Morning Walkers Club

9-10am

Gather in the Glen for a slow-paced 1/2 mile wooded, moderate trail walk. Enjoy the beauty of the Glen and each other while getting some morning exercise. Geared toward older adults, but all ages and abilities welcome. Walk-ins welcome. Program: Free. Parking: Free for participants. Meet at Vernet Ecological Center: 405 Corry St. Weather permitting.

For registration through Yellow Springs Senior Center, visit MyActiveCenter.com. Registered participants notified of cancellation. Questions to Maggie Dean at info@ysseniors.org, 937-767-5751.

13 Yellow Springs Street Fair:

Glen Helen Booth

9-5pm

25

THUR

Screech-Owl Release

7:30pm

Every year the Raptor Center raises young screech-owls that were displaced from their nests. Join us as they take flight on their road to freedom. A short owl program to begin at 7:30pm, release to follow. The program will continue in light rain, heavy rain/wind will necessitate a cancellation. No registration required. Free. Camp Greene: 3452 Grinnell Rd.

30

SUN

Historic Grinnell Mill Open House

1-3pm

Drop in to explore a beautifully restored, historic 1811 gristmill near the banks of the Little Miami River. The Mill is available for overnight stays through AirBNB, with all proceeds supporting Glen Helen's ongoing work. Visitors can enter a raffle for a discounted overnight stay. Light refreshments and tours available. No registration required. Free. Meet at Grinnell Mill: 3536 Bryan Park Rd.

JULY

2

9

Golden Morning Walkers Club

9-10am

See June 4 for full description of this slow-paced 1/2 mile moderate trail walk.

16

23

30

THUR

25

SAT

Summer Birding

8-10am

See June 14 for full description.

25

SAT

Buck Full Moon Hike

9-10:30pm

Hike is led by guide Anne Griffith spanning a moderate one-mile hike on the Inman Trail. The Buck Full Moon was named by ancient cultures in reverence to the noble deer. We recommend bringing a small or red flashlight. Registration required. Program: \$10, members free. Parking: Free for participants. Trailside Museum: 505 Corry St.

25

SAT

Photographers Hike

9-10am

Join Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist and Photographer Eric Wright for a relaxing photography hike. Bring your own camera of any variety. All experience levels are welcome. Registration requested. Program: Free. Parking \$10, free for members. Vernet Ecological Center: 405 Corry St.

26

SUN

Nature Journaling

1:30-3:30pm

See June 14 for description.

AUGUST

6

13

20

27

THUR

Golden Morning Walkers Club

9-10am

See June 4 for full description of this slow-paced 1/2 mile moderate trail walk.

8

SAT

Art on the Lawn: Raptor Center Booth

10am-5pm

Visit the Raptor Center booth at Yellow Springs Art on the Lawn





Visit the Glen Helen booth! Get your nature themed merchandise, plus learn about our programs and membership opportunities. Downtown Yellow Springs, Xenia Ave.



14
SUN

Summer Birding
8-10am

We'll search the area around the Little Miami River for breeding birds on this one-mile walk. Program: \$5, members free. Parking: Free. Grinnell Mill: 3536 Bryan Park Rd.

14
SUN

Nature Journaling
1:30-3:30pm

Join Anne Griffith for some guided creative time in the Glen. New and veteran journalers are welcome. Bring drawing supplies or buy a new journal/pencil at the Nature Shop. Ages 12+ Registration required. Program: \$5 + \$10 parking, members free. Trailside Museum: 505 Corry St.

20
SAT

Honey Harvest Fest
11am-3pm

A family-friendly event hosted by Greene County Beekeepers Association. Check out displays on beekeeping equipment, bee suits, video footage of bees, and a closed observational hive. Hands-on activities for all include supervised honey extraction and filtering, processing, observation of bottling honey, and beeswax candle rolling! Free. No registration required. For more info, go to gcbeekeepers.org. Camp Greene: 3452 Grinnell Rd.



7
TUE

Speaker Series: Growing Mushrooms
7-8:30pm

Marc Amante from Central State University Extension, will teach you how to cultivate, identify, and harvest Wine Cap mushrooms in your home garden or as a part of your farm business. He will demonstrate the hands-on processes for how to build a mulched bed Wine Cap production system. Registration required. Program: \$10. Parking: Free for participants. Vernet Ecological Center: 405 Corry St.



12
WED

Speaker Series: Native Butterflies
7-8:30pm

Join Ohio Lepidopterists president Rob Liptak for a talk about native butterflies! Open to the public. Program: Free. Parking: \$10, free for members. Vernet Ecological Center: 405 Corry St.

23
SUN

Nature Journaling
1:30-3:30pm

See June 14 for description.

28
FRI

Sturgeon Full Moon Hike
9-10:30pm

Join guide Anne Griffith for a moderately strenuous three-mile hike to the Pine Forest and nearby School Forest. We recommend bringing a small or red flashlight. Registration required. Program: \$10, members free. Parking: Free for participants. Trailside Museum: 505

29
SAT

Late Summer Birding
8-10am

We'll search the Glen for summer residents and southward migrants on this one-mile walk. Program: \$5, free for members. Parking: \$10, free for members. Meet at the Cascades Parking Lot: 1075 State Route 343.

29
SAT

Photographers Hike
9-10am

Join Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist and Photographer Eric Wright for a relaxing photography hike where we'll explore the Glen while practicing photography along the way. Bring your own camera of any variety. All experience levels are welcome. Registration requested. Program: Free. Parking \$10, free for members. Vernet Ecological Center: 405 Corry St.

Group sizes are limited. Register early to ensure your participation. Many programs are discounted for Glen members. Email sstrong@glenhelen.org for member discount code. Please visit glenhelen.org to learn more. Join Today!



Glen Helen



Announcements

SAVE THE DATE: WHOO COOKS FOR YOU Sunday, September 6, 2026

An extraordinary feast benefiting the Raptor Center. The area's best chefs prepare stunning, multi-course meals for our guests to enjoy among live raptors, a silent auction, signature art and cocktails. Ticket sales open July 1, 2026. Event sponsorship available. All sponsors receive advanced ticket purchase options. Limited tickets will be available, and the event is likely to sell out quickly! glenhelen.org/whoo-cooks-for-you

JOIN OUR FAMILY OF VOLUNTEERS

We depend on volunteers to carry out the programs, events, and initiatives that help preserve Glen Helen. From fundraisers, to mailings, to trail maintenance, volunteers at the Glen not only participate in our important efforts, they have fun while they do it! Whether you are a short-term volunteer with a service requirement, or seek a longer-term position, we may have an opportunity for you. To learn more, and to join our family of volunteers, visit glenhelen.org/volunteer

ECO-BIRTHDAYS AT GLEN HELEN

Celebrate your child's birthday with a nature-themed party.

- Live Animal encounter and outdoor activity
- Two hours of private party space for up to 20
- Party room set up with tables, and chairs
- Choose from 4 program themes
- Ideal for ages 4+, open to everyone

For inquiries and bookings, please contact rentals@glenhelenassociation.org or 937-769-1902 x1101

ECO-CAMP REGISTRATION NOW AVAILABLE

Experience community. Connect with nature. Find joy. Eco-Camp is open to any child ages 5-17. Themed day-only sessions, progressive, overnight, and specialty overnight sessions are available. Eco-Camp sessions run weekly June 15 through August 7, 2026.

GLEN HELEN NATURE SHOP

Now located in the Trailside Museum. Open Thursday through Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm.



Continued from page 6.

nestling and the wild pair will teach all the necessary skills for success. BUT, when the female hawk flew off of this nest during our approach, the younger of the two nestlings was knocked out of the nest, falling the entire distance to the pile of dead grass surrounding the base of the pole. Somehow, this little guy managed to only sustain a broken leg and head trauma. Both nestlings came back with us to our clinic. While the tiny male had to stay in the clinic for treatment on his leg, the female was given a clean bill of health, and Helen got her first foster chick! The male joined them once his leg healed. Ultimately, we determined that he could not survive on his own, so he now lives at the Center. We named him Icarus.

A couple weeks later, and much to everyone's excitement, both eggs in the incubator hatched. Though one of the chicks didn't make it due to physical abnormalities, the other chick also went out to be temporarily raised by Helen. We were eventually able to slip the nestlings into wild red-tailed hawk nests, but their time spent with Helen was critical to their success as birds develop their sense of self in the first few weeks after hatching. Since around three weeks of age is the best time to re-home nestlings, the ability to use non-releasable birds as temporary fosters tremendously increases chances of success once back in the wild. Good job Helen! We couldn't have done it without you!

Now that Helen has had a taste of motherhood, she has taken her nesting even more seriously and if you come by her enclosure you will notice her sitting on "dummy" eggs with her mate standing guard. Will her services be called upon again? Stay tuned!

The Fuzzy Four

In April 2026, Duane Hook, a long time volunteer and friend of the raptors, was called upon to re-nest a fallen baby screech owl back into its nest. Unfortunately upon climbing up and seeing the state of the adult owl, it was decided that the babies needed help and the three babies and one egg were removed and brought to the Raptor Center for care. This nest had been watched by the homeowners frequently, and one parent had disappeared about a week prior and the remaining parent did not seem to be able to provide what the babies needed. After a few days of care, the egg hatched and now all four owlets are growing and developing well. They will likely be released at the Screech-Owl release on June 25 after graduating from hunting school. See the events calendar for more details!

Article by Rebecca Jaramillo.



Two day old red-tailed hawk displaced from its nest in eastern Ohio. This chick was initially raised by Helen, an educational ambassador at the Raptor Center, before being placed into a wild foster nest.

The Glen Helen Raptor Center rescues and rehabilitates birds of prey while also educating the public on the role of raptors in Ohio ecosystems.



Natural History of Glen Helen

SHAPED BY WATER



Find these brachiopod fossils in the Inman Trail stepping stones at Glen Helen as shown here.

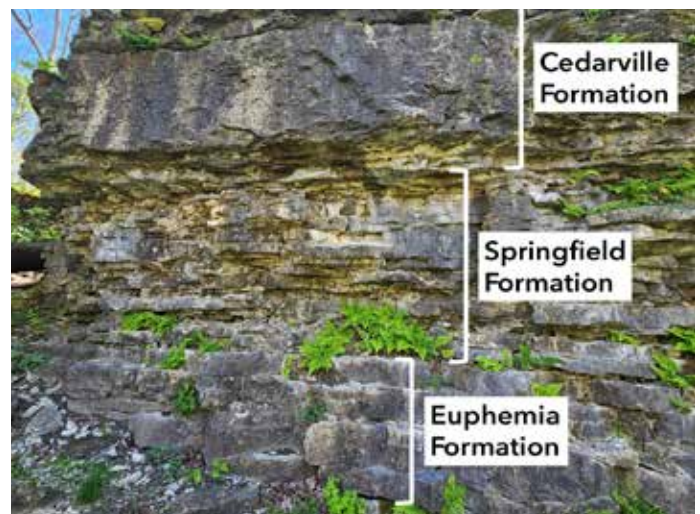


A wonderful fossil display from the Glen, located inside the Trailside Museum.

Below: This rock face in the Glen shows the Cedarville, Springfield, and Euphemia formations. *Photo by Kara Peters.*

Page 13: This drawing, by Geologist Peter Townsend, shows the rock layers (stratigraphy) at Glen Helen. The youngest layers of rock are at the top, the oldest layers are at the bottom.

Our story of how the Glen Helen landscape was shaped takes us back to when Ohio was a shallow tropical sea. As you walk through the Glen, the surrounding rocks are a staggering 440 million years old, when fungi ruled the land and small fish and invertebrates—like brachiopods, crinoids, and trilobites—ruled the seas. The sediments, plants, and animals in this ancient sea became the rocks in the Glen today, which are mostly limestones and dolomites, sitting atop shales. You can find fossils of brachiopods, or clam-like shelled organisms, in the dolomite steps that lead into the Glen and in rocks along the trails. See if you can spot them! Stop by the Trailside Museum after your hike to see some examples of the fossils here.



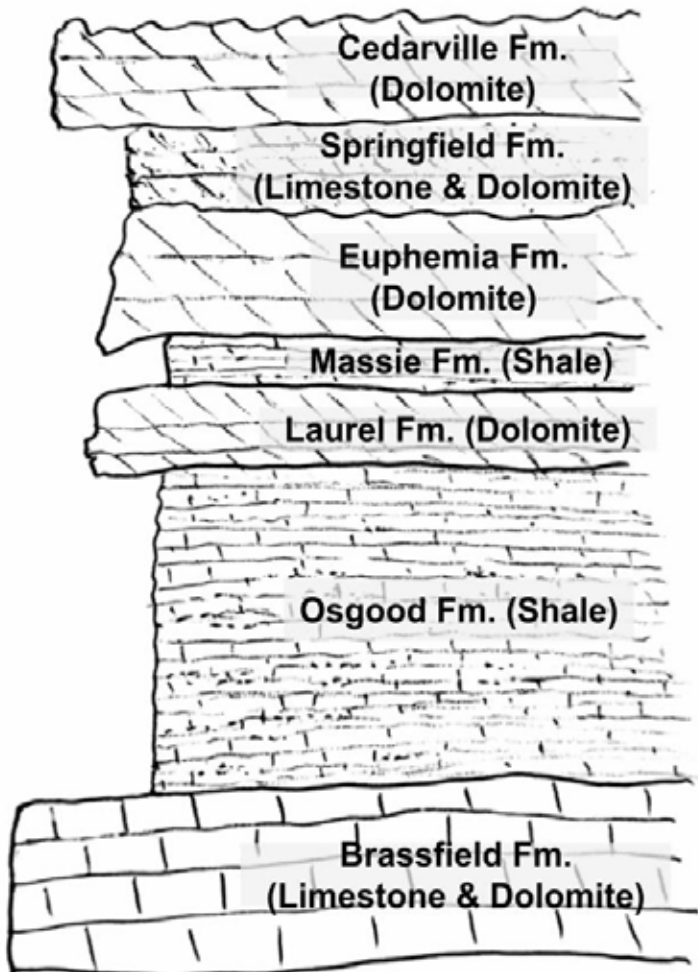


Team Glen Helen

OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBER

But how did the rocks of this ancient seafloor become the Glen Helen landscape that we know and love today? Towards the end of the Ice Age roughly 18,000 years ago, when mastodons and giant beavers roamed the land, glacial meltwater floods rapidly sculpted the Glen. As the Earth warmed, the giant ice sheet that covered middle-Ohio to the Arctic melted rapidly, sending roaring floods through the Glen rocks, eroding them. Limestones and shales eroded faster than dolomites because limestone dissolves in water and shale is quite soft. In just a few hundred years, these powerful glacial meltwaters created waterfalls like the Cascades and carved out Glen Helen’s valley where Birch Creek now sits.

This dynamic landscape is shaped by an intricate dance between Earth and Water—a dance that continues today. How will the Glen Helen landscape change next? *Article by Kara Petes, a GH volunteer.*



We are excited to welcome **Amelia Lively**, *Assistant Director of the Outdoor Education Center* at Glen Helen. A Delaware, Ohio resident, Amelia comes to us with a background in animal care, environmental education, and administrative support. Read on to hear from Amelia herself.



Amelia: What brings you to the Glen?

I was searching for a position which allowed me to be involved with environmental education and administrative support. I was excited to see an opportunity open at Glen Helen that offered both. I was happy to accept the role of Outdoor Education Center Assistant Director.

What is your favorite part of the natural world?

Coming from an animal-focused background, I am always super excited to see wildlife of all varieties. I am also becoming more of a plant enthusiast and am always happy to see wildflowers, however maybe don't ask me to ID them just yet!

If you could be anything that lives in the Glen, what would it be and why?

I believe I would be a painted turtle. They go through life unhurried, they can relax in a sunny spot, or swim in the creek whenever they please. And, they never have to decide what outfit to wear since they always look stylish.

Finally, what is one of your favorite quotes?

"I don't want my thoughts to die with me; I want to have done something. I'm not interested in power or piles of money. I want to leave something behind. I want to make a positive contribution—know that my life has meaning." –Temple Grandin



It Takes a Village

THE GLEN HELEN OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER



Photo by Stacey Suihkonen

Seventy years ago, a special place which seeks to reconnect humans with the natural world through immersion, education, and community came to life –the Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center. After many years of planning, raising funds, and hard work, the first student group experienced Outdoor School in 1956. That was just the beginning of seven decades of multi-day, overnight, life-changing experiences for students and their teachers.

All of this has been possible because of partnerships between passionate and motivated people. It started with a shared vision of “school camp”. It takes a village” as the saying goes and many people made this vision possible and many people continue to make this vision a reality to this day through new collaborations and partnerships.

“Students thrive here. I’ve seen first-hand the character building through the program that becomes a lifelong memory.”

We would like to take a moment to highlight some of those folks who have helped to keep the Outdoor Education Center’s programming alive and well for seven decades. Folks who have been brave enough to say “our students need and deserve this,” folks who have put in the extra time and effort to plan, raise funds, and physically get students to the Glen, and folks who see the transformations in their students after attending Outdoor School.

Preparing students for Outdoor School is a big undertaking and is often championed by a single individual within a school. It takes months of planning

and preparation to get students signed up, forms completed, questions answered, and bedrolls packed. These champions are usually teachers who are working to continue a decades-long tradition. Sixth grade teacher Jaime Jackson with Talawanda Middle School shares that “we’ve been coming since 1976 because of what it does for our students and our community.”



Brian Knostman and Ruskin Team: Champion teacher Brian Knostman chaperoning the Ruskin Elementary Outdoor School visit in February 2023, pictured with Ruskin Elementary teachers.

Former Dayton Public School teacher Brian Knostman championed the Outdoor School program for about 15 years before retiring. Even now he continues to chaperon with his former school during their Outdoor School week. When asked why, Knostman says “it’s a worthwhile endeavor for teachers to see their students in a different environment, where they can grow confidence, where they can gain problem solving skills, where they can show the teacher what they can do out in the real world.”

The reward of bringing students to Glen Helen motivates our partners to make sure students have the opportunity to experience Outdoor School each year. Columbus Academy has been attending since at least 1973 and sees this as a “new life experience” and the first time away from home for most of their fourth-grade students. Teacher Bill Schmidt with Doherty School mentions that “Students thrive here. I’ve seen first-hand the character building through the program that becomes a lifelong memory.”

Former Middle School Assistant Principal, now high school history teacher at Dayton Early College Academy, Elton Griffith, echoes that by sharing, “Kids who have lots of referrals and shouldn’t be out the building are thriving here with no issues.”

It truly is a chance for kids to be kids, to “become unplugged from electronics and find a world outside and engage with friends,” shares McGuffey Montessori School teacher Mark Radlinski. Not only is Outdoor School beneficial to the students, but Ruskin Elementary teachers see a chance to “go on hikes and learn” with their students and to “be a student with them.”

Miami Valley School has been attending Outdoor School since 1972, and lead teacher Yvonne Martin has been coordinating the trip for a decade because “when we get back to school, it will be different—students will be more connected with each other and with us. It’s a new type of relationship and I love it.” E.D. Smith Elementary School has been attending since at least 1973, and teacher Erin Nye acknowledges that “there isn’t another opportunity for students like this anywhere in the area. This is local, hands-on, and so connective and so important for students.”

Without the drive, passion, and dedication of the schools and their teachers, administrators, students and parents, where would our Outdoor Education Center be? It certainly would be a different place. Fortunately, we don’t need to answer that question. Instead, we are able to joyfully celebrate 70 years of providing students and their teachers with transformative experiences immersed in the beautiful and natural setting of Glen Helen. *Article by Robyn Wright and Kelsey Mazur.*



Above: Mark Radlinski has championed the Outdoor School program for McGuffey Montessori. Pictured here with Partnerships & Marketing Manager, Kelsey Mazur, after a successful program week.

McGuffey Montessori teacher and coach DeAndre Williams is a champion for the magic of the Outdoor School program.



Glen Helen

405 Corry Street
Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387-1895
937-769-1902
www.glenhelen.org

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Old Lime Kiln

Beginning in the 1840s, some areas along the edge of the Glen were quarried. Limestone blocks were used to build kilns—giant furnaces that convert limestone into lime for building and agriculture. The lime was used for plasters, mortar, and fertilizers. Quarry operations eventually ceased, and in the early 1950s

these lime kilns were completely dismantled. Blocks from the former kilns were repurposed to build the Inman Steps and the Trailside Museum. This Lime Kiln and others, were situated along the bike path in our Cory Street parking lot.