

The Resource

Employee Newsletter of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources

MARCH 2003



A MAN OF ALL SEASONS

The daily life of a state wildlife officer encompasses a broad range of activities — some of which can be dangerous, and others that show a genuine concern for animals. Byron Rice, an officer with the Division of Wildlife in Clark County, acknowledged, “I wear lots of hats.”

His basic duty is to enforce laws governing fishing, hunting, trapping, and litter. Officers also investigate stream-pollution incidents, such as chemical dumps or manure spills, to determine damage to fish, wildlife, and the environment.

Much of an officer’s effectiveness depends on personal skills, even though they carry a gun, radio, pepper spray, and expandable baton. Byron said, “The greatest weapon you can have is your brain. It can save you more than anything else.”

A lot of his day-to-day work is complaint related, such as trespassing problems: “We get calls from the sheriff to investigate landowner complaints about people being on private land without permission. The majority of illegal hunters or anglers I encounter are cooperative” — but not always.

In the early days of his career, he and another wildlife officer stopped to check out a complaint about two people fishing illegally in a pond; the landowner wanted to press charges. Byron was explaining to the couple (a man and a woman) that they were going to get a ticket. The man started fidgeting, and — sure enough — took off running, leaving his girlfriend behind. Byron was chasing the guy in a woods when it suddenly occurred to him that the guy could quite easily ambush him. But he didn’t. He ran into the nearby town and



disappeared. Byron didn’t get his man that day, but hasn’t forgotten his face: “I expect to run into him in town one of these days.”

Byron explained that routine fishing checks are a good time to enforce litter regulations. Some anglers just drop their trash right on the ground where they fish. According to Byron, these people don’t get a warning: “I generally give them a ticket, since they should know better.”

He also gives presentations on wildlife topics to local sports clubs, civic organizations, and schools. Many people no longer have direct contact with Ohio’s wild creatures, and so a display of “animal parts” — skulls, fur, antlers — gives them a hands-on opportunity to learn about wildlife. When the presentations are over, “I get lots of questions,” Byron said. “There’s always a big Q&A time, mostly dealing with problems with critters — like raccoons getting into the garbage.”

“The job changes with the season,” he reported. “During hunting season, I can get 15 to 20 calls a day. During the rest of the year, the calls are generally about nuisance or sick animals — like when a motorist hits a deer.”

He works with farmers in regards to crop damage caused by animals. The deer-damage control program allows farmers to eliminate deer outside the legal hunting season. Another recent nuisance animal that keeps him busy is the Canada goose. “The wildlife officer in the county is usually the first contact in these situations,” he noted.

In winter, an important activity is the wood duck nest box inventory. “I get out on frozen ponds to check and clean the boxes.” He explained that wood ducks are reclusive, and usually live in old dead trees. But farming and development have altered the ducks’ habitat, so the division provides them places to live. “Which the ducks like,” he added.

Other winter activities include attending sports club meetings (such as Ducks Unlimited), helping with hunter education classes, participating in training, and “getting organized! I catch up on my files, wrap up court cases — a lot of it’s related to deer season. But fishing season is right around the corner.”

Byron is single and lives in a red house that backs up to a thick woods, just north of Springfield. He has a big yard, goldfish pond, lots of plants, and bird feeders. “This is just what I was looking for,” he grinned.

His interests are very much in keeping with his job. He’s an active hunter who has trained his black lab Belle to hunt birds. His home is decorated with wildlife paraphernalia, including several turkey feather mounts, a fox pelt, wildlife prints, and a clock that chimes with bird songs.

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He also enjoys fishing. His most adventurous outing was a fishing trip to Alaska, where he caught salmon on the rivers, and halibut on the ocean.



Good dog, Belle!

Trapping is also on the agenda, with fox, muskrat, and mink on the list. "There's more mink around than you might think," he stated. He also finds time for competitive shooting and a vegetable garden.

Byron was born in Columbus, and earned his bachelor's degree from Eastern Kentucky University (Richmond), majoring in Parks and Recreation Management, with a minor in Law Enforcement. Previously he worked in Kentucky as a naturalist intern for the U.S. Forest Service at Daniel Boone National Forest, and at the Berea experimental station as a biological aide. Nearly 10 years ago, he was hired by the Division of Wildlife for an officer position, attended the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy, and was assigned to Clark County.

OHIO BICENTENNIAL

On March 1, Ohio was officially 200 years old. The journey to statehood was long and eventful.

Back in 1787, the federal government created the Northwest Territory, which contained mini-territories for "not less than three nor more than five states."

The Ohio Country was ruled by a governor, secretary, and three judges, who were all appointed by Congress. When the adult male population numbered 5,000 in 1798, the territory was permitted to form a House of Representatives.

Cincinnati was the site of the first meeting of the House in 1799. Edward Tiffin was elected speaker of the House and William Henry Harrison became the territory's representative to Congress.

When the population reached 60,000, the territory could apply to the federal government for statehood. A faction, led by territorial governor Arthur St. Clair, wanted to divide the state and avoid statehood altogether. He was opposed by Thomas Worthington who urged Congress to reject that plan, and in 1800 Congress agreed.

Two years later, Congress passed an "enabling bill" that authorized the formation of state government in Ohio. In April, President Thomas Jefferson signed it into law, setting state boundaries and the right to create a constitution.

The first constitutional convention met in Chillicothe in November, 1802, where 35 men feverishly wrote a state constitution in 29 days. The first state election took place in January, 1803; Edward Tiffin was elected governor. Ohio's constitution was approved by Congress and signed by Jefferson on February 19.

Ohio's first official state business took place on March 1, 1803 with the transfer of power from territorial officers to elected state officials.

There is a curious little wrinkle to the story, however. Congress didn't formally start admitting states to the Union until 1812, with the admission of Louisiana. So Ohio wasn't "officially" part of the United States until 1953, when President Dwight Eisenhower signed retroactive legislation recognizing March 1, 1803 as Ohio's formal "birthday."

For more Ohio Bicentennial information, visit www.ohio200.com.



TIDBITS

SHADES OF GRAY: Steve Gray is the new chief of the Division of Wildlife, responsible for Ohio's fish and wildlife management programs, as well as management of more than 170,000 acres of state wildlife areas. He began his career with ODNR in 1976 and became assistant chief of Wildlife in 1991. Steve has a bachelor's degree in wildlife management from OSU. The Grays live in Kingston (Ross County).



SPEAKING OF WILDLIFE: Vicki Ervin is now communications manager for the Division of Wildlife, in charge of the division's communications efforts, including media relations, production of the "Wild Ohio" TV show and "Wild Ohio Magazine," and event displays. She joined ODNR in 1983, and has been the information specialist for Wildlife District One since 1997. Vicki earned a bachelor's degree in photography from OSU, and lives near Centerburg, Knox County, with her family.

FROM WETLANDS TO WATERSHEDS: Kim Baker, a wetlands expert with extensive experience in environmental policy, is the new watershed planning coordinator for the Kokosing State Scenic River. She has responsibility for developing plans for the river and its watershed, located in portions of Knox, Morrow, Ashland, Coshocton, and Richland counties. Her work includes evaluating water quality and working with county officials to protect the watershed from environmental damage. Kim previously was the environmental administrator for REALM.

THE PRETTIEST GARDENS

From Laura Roth, Horticulturist



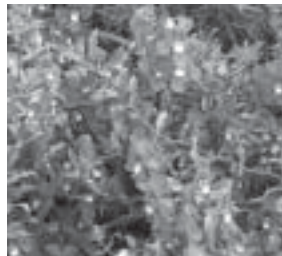
Angelonia (say an-jel-OH-nee-uh) Summer snapdragons bloom all summer long!

Last summer, Laura Roth planted angelonia in many of the containers at Fountain Square. She said, “Angelonia is a fun plant from the snapdragon family — and it’s ‘very hot’ right now. It was the most talked-about plant this past year.”

Angelonia is from Central and South America, and it loves humid heat. Laura added, “They like the full, hot sun and humid summers we’ve been having in Ohio. They bloom like crazy in this kind of weather!”

Delicate spires grow to two or three feet tall. A profusion of small flowers remind you of snapdragons or orchids. Colors include violet, pink, purple, white, and two-tone. Lance-shaped green leaves are a couple of inches long.

Angelonia starts blooming early and continues until frost. You don’t have to dead-head the blooms, but cutting off faded flower stalks encourages repeat blooming. And don’t be afraid to cut flowers to put in your vases. “They give an airy, graceful look to your arrangement, and last a long time.”



According to Laura, “It’s a perennial but acts like an annual in Ohio. They’re a good bedding plant, but are really excellent in containers — they add an elegant touch. I include angelonia with petunias, sweet potato vine, and sunset plant.”

This low-maintenance plant is trouble free, with no particular diseases or insect problems. It grows vigorously, and can be propagated from tip cuttings, by division, or by seeds. A lovely benefit is its fruity aroma; Laura said, “The flowers smell like grapes, and the leaves like apples.”

As for the size of the container, she offers this classic tip: “For the most pleasing proportion, the container should be one-third of the display, and the plants should measure two-thirds.”



MORE TIDBITS

TEAM BOAT DOCK: Alan Ranck, at Dillon State Park, sent a note to honor some of his fellow workers — **Brian Kearton, Billy Litton, Joe Swope, Josh Rutan, Cindy Powell, and Rod Dunmead.** This group showed exceptional teamwork this past fall when they removed the park’s boat docks in record time. This job usually takes three or four days, and they got it done in only one-and-a-half. Good work, team!

EAGLES LOVE OHIO: A record 304 bald eagles were observed in Ohio during the annual mid-winter survey. This year’s count included 167 mature birds and 137 immature ones (less than five years old). Observers saw bald eagles in 45 counties during the two-week count, with counties along the western shore of Lake Erie reporting the highest number. Sandusky County had 79

sightings; the next four highest counts were Ottawa 20, Trumbull 20, Seneca 17, and Erie 13. **Mark Shieldcastle** said, “As many as 200 of the immature eagles tallied are two-to-three-year-old birds that fledged from Ohio nests and are now beginning to seek out nesting territories in their first attempt to find a mate and reproduce.” Last year’s report was 259 bald eagles, and only six eagles were counted in our first winter survey in 1979.

TWIN OUTBOARDS: The Division of Watercraft appointed two new deputy chiefs in January. **Mike Quinn** is in charge of field operations and **Bill McGarity** is responsible for registration and titling operations. Since March, 2001, Mike was the law enforcement administrator; he came to ODNR from the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Bill was

previously Watercraft’s human resources administrator. He began his career with ODNR in 1983 with Civilian Conservation.

SCHOLARSHIP OFFER: **Randy Tunnel**, Wildlife District 5, announced that applications for the Larry A. Hart Memorial Scholarship are now being accepted. The \$500 scholarship is available to Ohio residents who major in law enforcement or natural resources. The fund is administered by the Wildlife Officer’s Lodge 143 of the Fraternal Order of Police and the Twin Valley Rod and Gun Club of Preble County. For an application, or to contribute to this program, contact the Larry A. Hart Memorial Scholarship Committee, 120 Wayne Ave., Eaton OH 45320, or call 937-456-5371.

MILESTONES

Promotions

Theresa Shaffer, to Business Services Officer, Wildlife #4

Vicki Ervin, to NR Administrator 2, Wildlife/Communications

David Zacharias, to Fish Hatchery Superintendent, Wildlife/Senecaville Hatchery

Robert Hare, to Wildlife Area Technician, Wildlife #4/Salt Fork

Retirements

Michael Budzik, Chief, Wildlife, 28+ years

Cynthia Bishop, Public Information Specialist, Wildlife/Graphics, 28+ years

Gene Edmond, Fisheries Biologist 2, Wildlife/Sandusky, 28+ years

Glenn Fulton, Area Technician, Wildlife #5/Fallsville, 27+ years

Doug Johnson, Fisheries Biologist 2, Wildlife/Sandusky, 28+ years

Patrick Keyes, Fish Hatchery Superintendent, Wildlife/Senecaville, 28+ years

Samuel Norris, Propagation Unit Supervisor, Wildlife/Urbana, 33 years

Van Tea, Education Officer, Wildlife #2, 32+ years

Jerry Wager, Pollution Abatement Land/Treatment Administrator, Soil, 25+ years

Terry Lucht, Soil Survey Project Leader, Soil/Wilmington, 30+ years

Mark Feusner, Soil Survey Project Leader, Soil/Findlay, 25+ years

Promotions/Transfers

Justin Reinhart, Conservation Engineer, from Coastal Management to Soil

Fred Hammon, SWCD Administrator, Soil, from Zanesville to Fountain Square

Deaths

Bonnie Jean Dees, retired Account Clerk, East Harbor State Park, January 24

ANNIVERSARIES

5 Years

William Beagle, Public Information Specialist, Wildlife #3

Bob Kruse, Motor Fleet Coordinator, REALM

Rick Burke, Technology Mgr., Soil

Greg Nageotte, Coastal NPS Program Manager, Soil/Sandusky

10 Years

Jill Kasai, Planner, REALM

Abbie Baughman, Administrative Assistant, Budget & Finance

Martin Joyce, Resource Mgmt. Administrator, Soil

15 Years

Betty Mason, Business Services Officer, Wildlife #3

20 Years

Mac Swinford, Geologist Supv., Geological Survey

Ray Petering, Assistant Fisheries Program Administrator, Wildlife

Lynne Stein, Secretary, Wildlife

25 Years

Rick Robbins, Soil Survey Project Manager, Soil/Findlay

Marty Hall, Assistant Manager, Parks/Tar Hollow

SIGN UP NOW FOR FREE CLASSES!



The schedule has been announced for Organizational Development's free classes in March. The classes are provided by the Office of Human Resources. For more information, visit www.ohiodnr.com/hr/orgdevelop.htm and click on "Curriculum Registration;" or you can call Jeaneen Hooks at 614-265-6994.

Microsoft Windows 2000 - March 13, 9:30-2, Building I

Microsoft Windows XP - March 25, 9:30-2, Building I

Microsoft Outlook E-mail - March 11, March 27, 9:30-12, Building I

Microsoft Outlook Calendar - March 11, March 27, 1:30-4; Building I

7 Habits of Highly Effective People - March 11-13, 8:30-5, Horace Collins Lab @ Alum Creek

Deferred Compensation - March 20, 10-11, Assembly Center

Truth through Science ("Determining Truth or Deception: Observations of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication") - March 19, 8:30-4:30, Assembly Center

NEW CLASS: Understanding the Basics of Real Estate:

Learn how to read legal descriptions, identify property lines, interpret property documents, understand acreage, and more. March 20, 8:30-4:30, Assembly Center



THE RESOURCE

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Bob Taft, Governor * Sam Speck, Director

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