



# Elk Lick Echo

A Newsletter of Floracliff Nature Sanctuary

Winter 2012

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## Introducing the Floracliff Field Studies

By: Beverly James, Preserve Manager

We are very excited to announce the first series of new educational workshops at Floracliff called the Floracliff Field Studies. The main purpose of the workshop series is to highlight biodiversity through hands-on experience and in-depth lectures. For the first four workshops, we will be focusing on the botanical, aquatic, or fungal diversity of mostly Floracliff and Kentucky, but in some cases also examining national and global diversity of some groups of species. Workshop participants will gain experience in species identification, biological surveys, stream sampling techniques, creating urban habitats, observing relationships between species, and more.

While the workshops are open to anyone, we think they will be of particular interest to naturalists, biology students, science educators, and land managers, as well as those with a strong passion for the subject. Each workshop will cost \$50, which covers a book or other resource for everyone who attends. All workshops will start at Floracliff, but will include field trips to other regional locations. To ensure a spot, early registration is strongly encouraged. We will be offering one scholarship per workshop to a current college student. Scholarship application and registration information can be found at the end of this article. Here is a brief synopsis of the workshops planned for 2012:

- **June 22-23: Backyard Wildlife Habitats:** Led by Mary Carol Cooper, who recently retired from the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife, this workshop will cover the benefits of native plants and insects, plant identification and propagation, microforests, wildlife, and nest box building. Field trips will include Floracliff, the University of Kentucky Arboretum, native plant gardens, and an outdoor classroom.
- **July 13-14: Mushrooms:** Led by Walt Sturgeon of the Ohio Mushroom Society, this workshop will cover identification, edibility, ecology, and folklore of mushrooms. Forays will be held at Floracliff and the Daniel Boone National Forest.
- **September 7-8: Aquatic Biodiversity:** Led by Michael Compton of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission and Ryan Evans of the Kentucky Division of Water, this workshop will cover identification and diversity of aquatic organisms, particularly



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fish and macroinvertebrates. Water chemistry, collection techniques, and data analysis will also be covered. Field trips will include Elk Lick Creek in Floracliff and a nearby stream for comparison.

- **November 3-4: Conifers:** Led by Rob Paratley of the University of Kentucky Department of Forestry, this workshop will highlight identification, adaptation, ecology, and utility of conifers from both our region and elsewhere. Field trips will include the Lexington Cemetery and the Daniel Boone National Forest.

For more information:

- **Detailed descriptions of the programs:** [www.floracliff.org/fieldstudies.html](http://www.floracliff.org/fieldstudies.html)
- **Registration form:** [www.floracliff.org/miscdocs/fieldstudies\\_registration.pdf](http://www.floracliff.org/miscdocs/fieldstudies_registration.pdf)
- **Scholarship application:** [www.floracliff.org/miscdocs/fieldstudies\\_scholarship.pdf](http://www.floracliff.org/miscdocs/fieldstudies_scholarship.pdf)

If you do not have internet access and would like a packet of the above sent to you, please contact Beverly James at 859-351-7770.

## Flora Focus: Twinleaf (*Jeffersonia diphylla*)

By: Nathan Strange



The flower of twinleaf has eight, white petals growing on a separate stalk than its leaf.

Named in honor of Thomas Jefferson by friend and botanist William Bartram, twinleaf frequents limestone areas of the Bluegrass region and the Mississippian Plateau between late March and early April, growing in rich, wooded areas. It has a blossom of eight white petals on a separate stalk than its leaves, which are palmately-veined and almost divided into two equal segments. The leaves give the plant its name, growing in a way that resembles a butterfly. By the time twinleaf flowers, the plant has only reached half of its mature height. It continues to grow to 12 to 18 inches tall and produces a leathery, pear-shaped fruit capsule containing the seeds. The capsule has the unique trait of opening and releasing seeds by way of a lid hinged on the back of the capsule.

Also known as rheumatism root and yellow root, twinleaf was used medicinally by Native Americans for various internal ailments as well as a poultice for injuries.

Only two species of twinleaf exist in the world with the native *Jeffersonia diphylla* found in Kentucky and surrounding states. The other species, *Jeffersonia dubia*, grows only in Japan. Floracliff is graced with large patches of the native twinleaf. However, the flower is short-lived and delicate, being very susceptible to wind and rain. This makes catching the plant in bloom a real treat!

## Many thanks to those who donated in the last quarter:

### Volunteers

Sara Cilles  
Melvin Cosby  
Laurel Garrett  
Colin Goggin  
David Gregory  
Hugh Huffman

Victoria Ligenza  
Ann Longsworth  
Claudia Marin  
Montessori Middle School of KY  
Terese Pierskalla  
David Robertson  
Leigh Anne Robertson  
Bill Rodgers

Charles Sither  
Chris Stieha

### Donors

**Spicebush:**  
Vivien Smith  
**Hickory:**  
Charles Sither

# Schedule of Events

All events require advance registration. Cost is \$5 per person or \$12 per family unless otherwise noted. Most programs last 2-3 hours. Call 859-351-7770 to register or for more information.

## Interpretive Hikes

### **Saturday, January 28th @ 1:00 p.m.: Winter Walk**

Even though winter is the dormant season, there is still plenty to observe in our forest this time of year. Join Preserve Manger Beverly James on this leisurely hike to Elk Lick Falls and Elk Lick Creek with stops along the way to discuss trees, geology, signs of wildlife, and more. Hiking level is moderate.

### **Saturday, March 24th @ 10:00 a.m.: Wildflowers of Early Spring**

Join us for the first wildflower hike of the season. We should see many early risers, such as trout lilies, bloodroot, hepatica, and twinleaf. Hiking level is moderate.

### **Wednesday, March 28th @ 10:00 a.m.: Mid-week Wildflower Hike**

For those with some free time during the week, this will be a great chance to catch the early spring wildflowers. Hiking level is moderate.

### **Saturday, March 31st @ 10:00 a.m.: Wildflower Folklore w/ Laura Baird**

Many of our wildflowers have interesting historical uses and superstitions or neat stories about how they were named. Floracliff field technician, Laura Baird, will discuss the fun facts of wildflowers on this hike to Elk Lick Creek. Hiking level is moderate.

### **Saturday, April 7th @ 1:00 p.m.: Wildflower Hike w/ Tara Littlefield**

Botanist Tara Littlefield of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission will lead this hike during the peak of our wildflower season. Hiking level is moderate.

## Weed Warrior Days - free!

**Saturday, January 7th, 10 am – 1 pm**  
**Saturday, February 4th, 10 am – 1 pm**  
**Saturday, March 3rd, 10 am – 1 pm**  
**Saturday, April 7th, 10 am – 1 pm**

Volunteer activities will involve assisting with the removal of exotic plants from the preserve. This is part of an ongoing effort to protect our native species and we rely on the help of volunteers. Please call ahead to register and receive more information at 859-351-7770. If you are interested in helping out on any other day, give us a call and we can work something out!

## Private Appointments

Private tours can be scheduled for small groups interested in visiting Floracliff. Interested parties can contact Beverly James by calling 859-351-7770 or email [floracliff@aol.com](mailto:floracliff@aol.com) to schedule an appointment.

**THE MARY E.  
WHARTON NATURE  
SANCTUARY AT  
FLORA CLIFF**

P. O. Box 21723  
Lexington, KY 40522

Phone: 859-351-7770  
Email: floracliff@aol.com  
Web address: www.floracliff.org

Floracliff is a non-profit organization. We rely on support from community members like you. Please support preservation in your region.

Yes! I would like to contribute a tax-deductible gift to Floracliff.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- \$25 - \$49 acorn
- \$50 - \$99 shooting star
- \$100 - \$299 spicebush
- \$300 - \$499 dogwood
- \$500 - \$999 hickory
- \$1000+ old oak tree
- other

Please make checks payable to Floracliff and mail to:  
Floracliff, P. O. Box 21723, Lexington, KY 40522.



**P.O. Box 21723  
Lexington, KY 40522**

*Address correction requested*