



Points of Interest

1 Lynx Prairie honors University of Cincinnati professor E. Lucy Braun (1889-1971). Prominent ecologist of the mid 1900's, Dr. Braun was the earliest advocate for the formation of the Edge of Appalachia Preserve (EOA). The U.S. Department of the Interior plaque just beyond the entrance recognizes the exceptional natural significance of Lynx Prairie and Buzzardroost Rock Preserves.

2 The forest around you is underlain with black Ohio Shale; the soil produced from this rock supports acid-loving plants. Virginia pine dominates the canopy, indicating that this area was cleared some 60-80 years ago. Dr. Braun noted the pine's arrival at Lynx in the 1920s. These shallow-rooted trees will eventually topple, giving way to red maple and tulip tree. Listen for the pine warbler's song in spring.

3 The curiously-curved trunks of these white oaks reveal a method of trail marking used by Native Americans. By tying down the main stem of a small sapling, a side branch is forced to assume the lead growth. The original stem withers and dies, leaving a permanent trail marker. Did native Americans create these markers, and maintain the open grasslands of Lynx? No one knows for sure.

4 This is North Prairie, the first of Lynx's eastern alkaline glades or barrens. Dominated by grasses such as big bluestem and Indian grass, this grassland community represents one of the easternmost extensions of the once-great mid-continental grasslands. In summer, look for rare plants such as blue-heart and an orchid, Great Plains ladies' tresses.

Sign post. Please stop and sign in. Turn right to begin Green Loop.

5 Standing at the edge of Elizabeth's Prairie (named in honor of EOA friend Elizabeth Brockschlager 1899-1991) one can witness the struggle between the open prairie and the "wall" of eastern forest. The sun-loving prairies are periodically managed with fire and manual cutting to "soften" these edges. Many plants such as woodland sunflower thrive in this dappled light, along with little wood satyr butterflies that dart in and out of the forest edge. Listen for the ubiquitous prairie warbler singing from the top of cedars in spring and summer.

6 Annette's Rock (named for Dr. Annette Braun, famed microlepidopterist and sister to Lucy Braun) is dotted with the steely-green fronds of purple-stemmed cliff-brake fern and is a magnesium-rich limestone called Peebles Dolomite. All the prairie openings are underlain with this rock, which produces a sweet or basic soil. Lynx's "archipelago" of grassland openings in a sea of forest owes part of its character to these contrasting soil types. Keep an eye on the rock for sunning eastern fence lizards.

7 Little bluestem, side-oats gramma and the rare purple three-awn grass dominate this thin-soiled, short-grass prairie. More dry-tolerant than their tall-grass cousins, these grasses share this opening with gray goldenrod and obedient plant.

Sign Post. Turn left to continue Green Trail, point #8 and to exit. Or continue straight to begin White Loop and point #9.

8 The large basal leaves of prairie dock dominate Long Prairie. In summer the leaves will be graced with eight-foot high stalks crowned with yellow sunflowers. The dock enjoys the numerous springs seeping from the slope above and shares the opening with St. John's-wort, a shrubby plant whose yellow flowers emerge in early summer.

9 Occidentalis Prairie is named for the profusion of the rare western sunflower *Helianthus occidentalis*. In spring, golden alexanders and the low-growing, green-tufted juniper sedge (new to science in 1991) precedes the sunflower. Butterflies abound in this opening: great-spangled fritillaries, countless swallowtails and skippers. The tree-dwelling rough green snake may be encountered here in fall when it leaves the trees to over-winter on the ground.

Signpost. Turn left to continue White Loop and to exit.

10 Just past the signpost, the trail enters a young oak and red cedar forest. On the right, look for rue-anemone in spring and in late summer for the mauve-colored flowers of the highly endangered crested coral-root orchid.

Sign Post. Turn left to continue the White Loop and to exit. Turn right and proceed to the next signpost, which marks both the beginning and the end of the Red Loop. Turn right.

11 The beginning portion of Narrow Prairie is ablaze with the endangered scaly blazing star in early summer. The far end of the prairie counters a bit later with the stunning purple-flowered stalks of rough blazing star and the sunflowers—western sunflower and whorled rosinweed. In spring blossoming redbud trees ring this as well as many other prairie openings.

12 This band of soil between these two prairies is derived from Ohio Shale. At this contact point between prairie and pine you can find pink lady's-slipper orchids growing alongside blazing stars. Don't be startled if an American woodcock bursts from the leaf litter in spring anywhere along these prairies' edges.

13 Annette's Prairie is known for the heart-shaped leaves of angle-pod, a milkweed vine. A rare Ohio species, this vine twines amongst prairie grasses and around the aromatic leaves of hoary mountain mint. The mint's potent smell will signal that you've left the trail and bruised one of the leaves of this summer species. In spring in the open gravelly soils at the opening's far edge look for a small rare mustard, the wedge-leaf whitlow-grass, and the greening mats of the prickly-foliaged rock sandwort.

14 This large rock ledge just below Coneflower Prairie exemplifies the extremely shallow soil present throughout the Lynx area. In spring, columbine and fresh fronds of bulblet fern drape the entire surface of this ledge. Mats of bristle-leaved sedge grow at your feet year round, along with the diminutive and rare lesser ladies' tresses orchid, which blooms in late summer.

15 This seasonally wet draw alongside the footbridge seems out of place in the dry rocky prairie surrounding. In summer look for hog peanut, the tall straight green stems of great bulrush, the white-flowered bonaset and the odd wavy margins of the sensitive fern. In fall look for the purple-fruited shrub elderberry.

Lynx Prairie Trail Map



Directions to Trailhead

From West Union (intersection of St. Rts. 125 and 41), travel on St. Rt. 125 east for 7.8 miles to Tulip Road in the town of Lynx.

Turn right on Tulip then

0.3 mile, take a left on Prairie

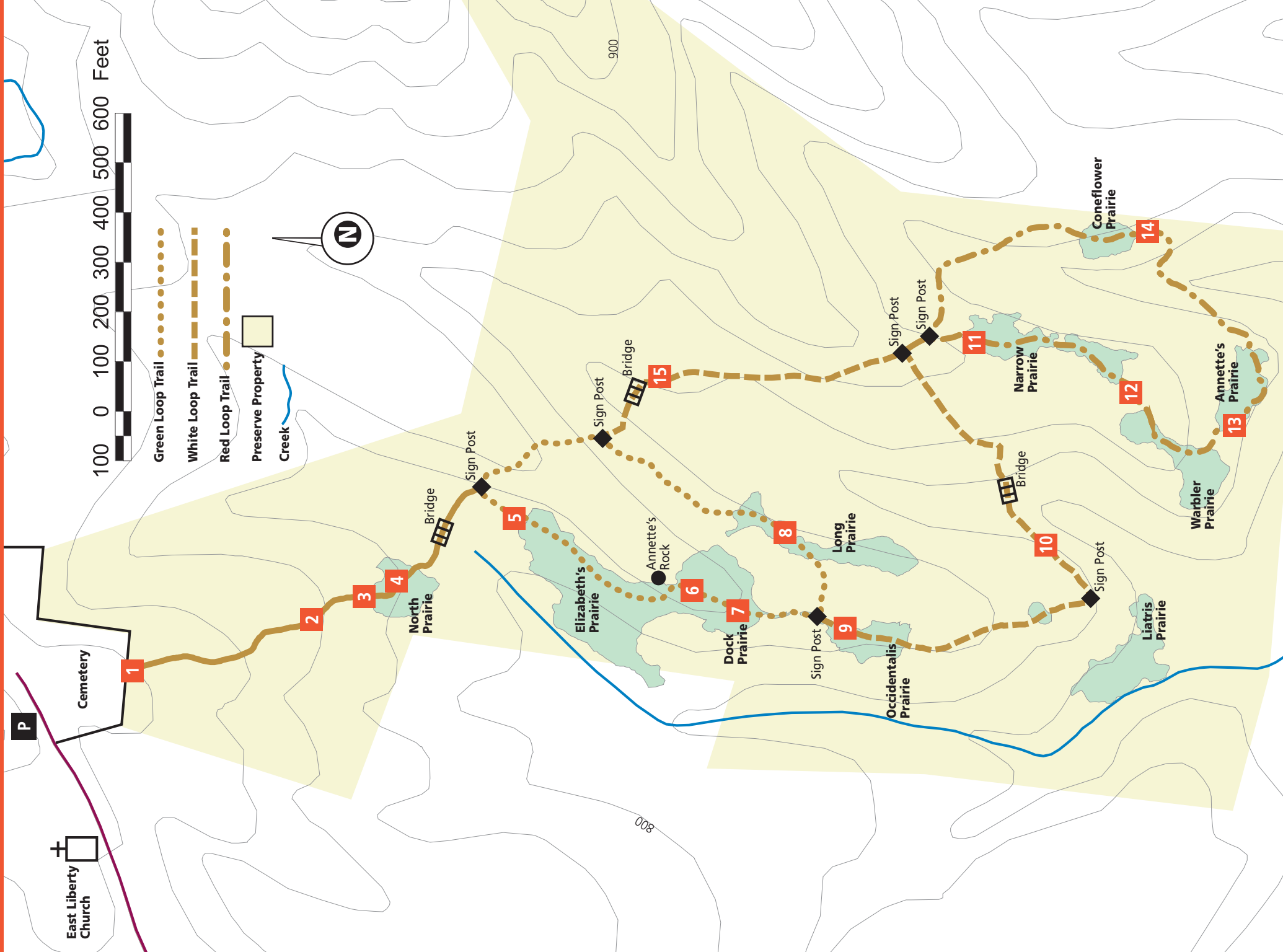
Road into East Liberty

Church parking lot.



This trail, its total length one and a half miles, consists of three loops, all starting at the Lynx Prairie sign.

Lynx Prairie Trail Map





1 Opened to the public in 1967, Buzzardroost Rock honors Christian and Emma Goetz. Like Lynx Prairie and The Wilderness Preserve, Buzzardroost is a National Natural Landmark.

2 The abundant grass along the stairs adjacent to the highway is big bluestem. Among the bluestem look for hoary puccoon in spring, and whorled rosinweed and shale barren aster in summer. This small prairie marks the western edge of a once-great prairie that flourished around the town of Lynx. This small town to the east of where you're standing lies in a dolomite-rich area whose shallow soils may have persisted with prairie plants even when the old-growth eastern forests dominated. Be careful crossing the highway!

3 Welcome to the "geologic basement" of the preserve. The Brassfield Limestone bedrock that lines the bottom of Easter Run is the oldest Silurian age rock represented at the Edge of Appalachia Preserve System. Resistant to weathering, this rock forms small falls on the lower slopes of Adams County. An example of this can be seen just downstream along the trail. Look for ebony jewelwing damselflies on the streamside vegetation in summer.

Sign in box. Please stop to sign in.

4 You now head upslope through one of Adams County's distinctive Estill Shale barrens. These slopes, once covered with towering sugar maples and tulip trees, were cleared for farming in the mid 1800s and early 1900s. Clearing left these slopes devoid of fertile topsoil, allowing prairie plants to colonize the exposed, clay-heavy Estill Shale. The shale is highly erodible and low in fertility—only the heartiest of plants can endure its extremes. Look for grooved flax, little bluestem grass, shale barren aster, orange coneflower, and prairie three-awned grass in summer, and into late fall look for the purple flowers of stiff gentian.

5 Pause in the red cedar dotted opening before your climb. In winter, look back over your shoulder for a view of the Devil's Teakettle. This Peebles Dolomite spire with a bowl-shaped top marked the early east-west wagon route that is now State Route 125. In summer, look around your feet for tall coreopsis, partridge pea and gray goldenrod. Watch the sky for black and turkey vultures and the occasional red-tailed hawk. Prairie warblers are ubiquitous in spring, when white-eyed vireos are present as well.

6 You now enter an area dominated by eastern red cedar and Virginia pine, both pioneering species. These trees will be your companions off and on for the next half-mile or so. You'll find showy flower displays in short supply. Instead look for the common sanicle, Virginia creeper, lopseed, white snakeroot, and spicebush. Sharp-eyed botanists will find the tiny flowers of honewort in early summer. Poison ivy is common, so stay on the trail!

7 Pause at the remarkable monolith at trail's edge. Long ago, this massive chunk of Peebles Dolomite broke loose from the cliffs above and rolled approximately 100 yards to its present location among the bladdernut shrubs. Look for bulblet fern, columbine, and wild hydrangea clinging to every crevice. Millipedes, camel crickets, bristletails, and mice use the rock cavities for refuge. Above you the limestone-loving blue ash clings to the rock's soil-free side. Listen for

the songs of the red-eyed vireo, ovenbird, and Acadian flycatcher in spring. Kentucky warblers call from the logged area behind the rock, but will leave when the forest eventually matures.

8 You now enter a rock garden with smaller cousins of the stone you just left. The forest is significantly more mature, with sugar maple as the dominant tree. The rocks are surrounded by paw paw shrubs and capped with floral bouquets: rue-anemone, columbine, wild ginger, and sicklepod in spring, and zigzag goldenrod in late summer. Early spring mornings here are delightful. Spring migrants such as magnolia and Blackburnian warblers and American redstarts pass through, while breeding birds like wood thrushes and ovenbirds stay to raise young. All these birds compete for your attention against the emerald light and the cathedral-like quality of this forest.

9 You now begin an ascent in a series of steps and switchbacks. In spring the forest floor is alive with bellworts, wild ginger, mayapple, Solomon's plume, and snakeroot. As the season progresses, note the twining heart-shaped leaves of wild yam. Pileated woodpeckers can be found year-round and, in summer, the whistles of eastern peewees will taunt you as your breathing accelerates on the way up the steep trail. In fall, you may witness a flock of noisy common grackles descend on the chinquapin oaks to feed on the acorns, dropping shells and caps of the half-inch round acorns. In winter, look back and out into the valley for a small glimpse of the spectacular view that awaits you.

Sign Post. Turn right.

10 Pause at the trail signpost to catch your breath. The black Ohio Shale below your feet marks the beginning of the acid-loving Appalachian Oak Woodland. Hickories, several oak species, and sour gum abound. The needle-sharp green spines of the greenbrier, a vine more affectionately known as "shin ripper," adorns the trail's edge, along with sapling sassafras trees. Look for the deeply-furrowed bark of the chestnut oak, an indicator of Ohio Shale soils. Downy woodpeckers, nuthatches, vireos and both tanager species travel these ridges. The most common flower is dittany; look for its small purple flowers in late summer.

11 Pause at the cliff's edge on this lofty ridge and enjoy your first significant view of the Ohio Brush Creek Valley. Don't forget to look down at your feet as well. In late summer you can find mountain rice grass, rare in Ohio, which grows at the cliff's edge along with meadow rue and witch hazel. In spring listen for the melodic song of the hooded warbler.

12 A footbridge over a chasm welcomes you to Buzzardroost Rock. Turkey vultures often soar around the grassy lookout and perch on the railing. In the broad valley 500 feet below, Ohio Brush Creek flows in a southerly direction. Summer-blooming prairie plants such as whorled milkweed and scaly blazing star adorn the rock. Grasses dominate: look for prairie dropseed, side oats gramma and little bluestem. The Great Plains Muhlenbergia is the most notable grass, recorded in few other Ohio locations. In spring, white flowers of rock sandwort grace the rock's margin along with the rare dwarf hackberry. The Preserve works daily to ensure that the prairie plants, expansive forested views, and the tree-lined Ohio Brush Creek remain for future generations to enjoy.

Turn around and retrace your steps back to the parking lot.



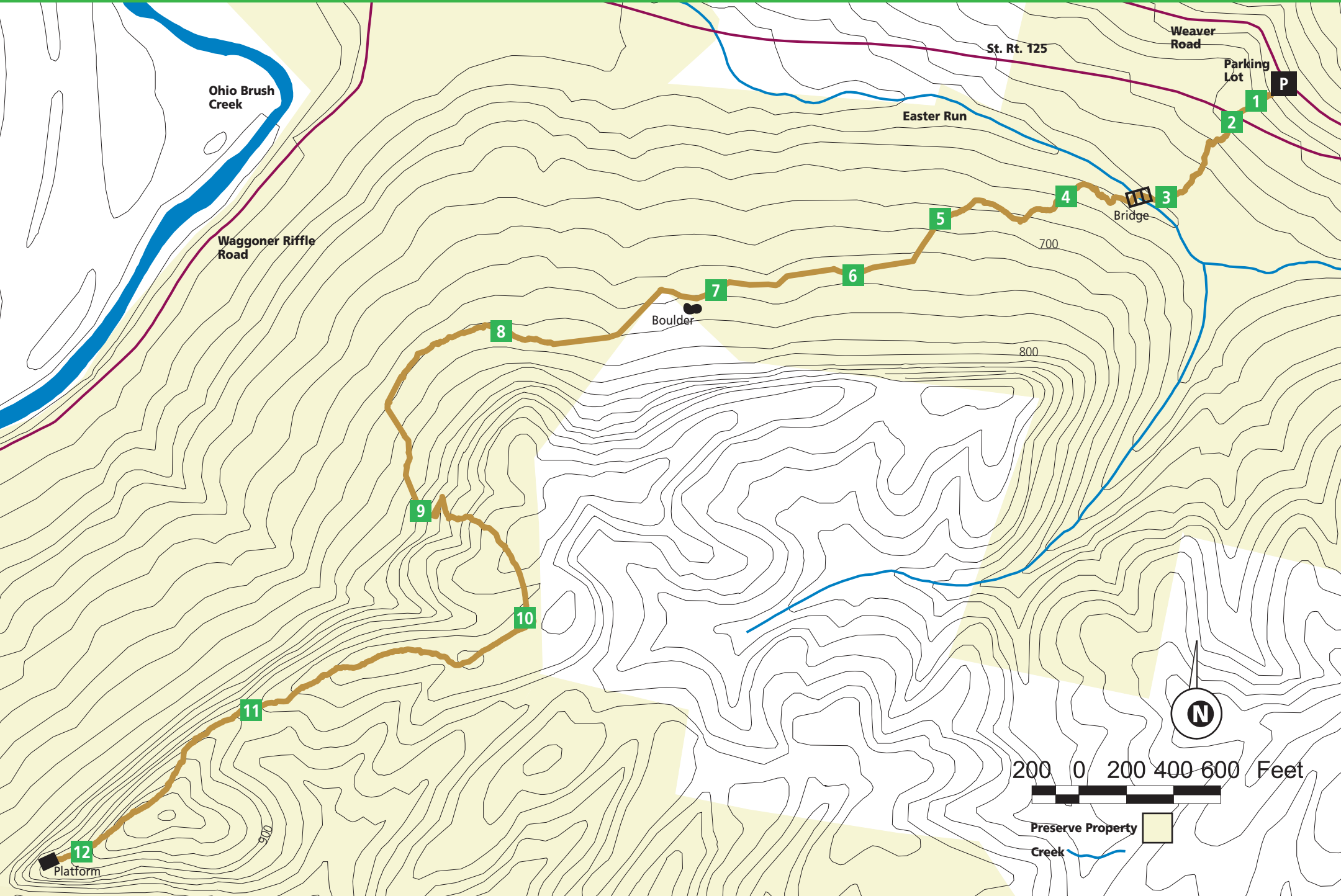
Directions to Trailhead

From West Union (intersection of St. Rts. 125 and 41), travel on St. Rt. 125 east for 5.8 miles to Weaver Road on the left. Follow Weaver for 0.9 mile to the trailhead parking lot on right.



This three-mile hike to Buzzardroost Rock and back begins at the Buzzardroost sign below the parking lot.

Buzzardroost Trail Map





1 The Wilderness Preserve honors Charlie Eulett. Charlie, an Adams County teacher, shared his love of prairies and woodlands with local residents and advocated the protection of these areas—a progressive idea in the 1960s and 1970s.

2 Downslope from the trail flows Saw Mill Branch; aptly named, as the young mixed woodland here followed cutting by a small timber mill that operated nearby during the 1970s. Compare the forest on your right with that above Saw Mill Branch on your left. The dry, south-facing forest above consists of chestnut oak, black gum and tulip tree with an understory of seedlings. Below, the forest just above the Branch faces north, and remains moist, shaded and more open, dotted with beech, sugar maple and tulip tree.

3 As you leave Saw Mill Branch and head west you pass above the northwest-flowing Cliff Run. Take note of the interesting evergreen stand here. This tree, the white cedar, characterizes the globally rare White Cedar Bluff Woodland plant community. The largest individuals stand near the cliff's edge below, growing near downed timber estimated at 500 years of age. These cliff-dwelling sentinels have survived for centuries, seeding areas upslope with "dog hair" thickets of young trees. Compare the smooth, flattened leaves of the white cedar with the prickly foliage of its cousin the red cedar. Please stay on the trail to avoid unnecessary impact on this very rare forest.

4 Walk carefully where the trail skirts the cliff's edge, however beautiful and distracting the views of the forest below. The land below has slipped, creating a boulder-strewn, bowl-shaped depression, blanketed with large-flowered trillium and hepatica in spring. Warblers of many species are easily viewed in season from your treetop vantage. The line of cliffs above the trail is Peebles Dolomite indented with the fossil remains of stony sponges and early corals. Small-flowered sunflower is common in late summer at the trail's edge.

5 This section of the trail was a historic wagon route in the early 1900s. The forest was cleared then but has grown back with remarkable vigor. Look for two shrubs that dominate this section of the trail, spicebush and paw paw. Search the spicebush in late spring and summer for folded leaves containing caterpillars of a butterfly, the spicebush swallowtail. The paw paw also hosts butterfly larvae, those of the zebra swallowtail. Both shrubs have distinctive odors when bruised: one smells fruity and the other smells like green peppers. Watch for the sharp right-hand turn in the trail, marked with double yellow paint blazes.

6 You now walk along the base of the dolomite cliffs above—don't forget to look up! Here the trail marks the contact point between dolomite and Estill Shale bedrock. At this seam, water percolating through the dolomite above is squeezed out in numerous springs as it reaches the impermeable clay soils. Tall boneset, cowbane and eastern box turtles mark these springs in late summer. Mud on your shoes is a good indicator of clay soils any time of year.

7 This section of the trail is good for spring wildflower viewing. Flowers abound on the forest floor and on small fern-draped boulders. Wild ginger forms low mats and is accompanied by stunning taller displays of twinleaf. Wild geranium and green violet, an unusual member of the violet family, accent the displays in early to late spring.

The sharp-eyed winter hiker may locate the rock near the cliff's top whose shape has earned it the name of "The pistol grip".

8 After crossing the bridge you enter a magnificent white oak forest on Estill Shale crossed by seasonal streams. Follow the trail downhill to Bread Pan Run for views of the Ohio Brush Creek Valley. Just beyond the distant tree line, preserve staff have planted half a mile of stream frontage with trees to protect this high-quality watercourse.

9 The trail leaves Bread Pan Run and ascends through a young forest dominated by eastern red cedar, Virginia pine, and tulip tree. These trees and the forest's scrubby nature reflect the land's past use for pasture and row crops. A species of woodland grass, bearded short-husk, grows at trail's edge.

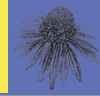
10 You now enter a spectacular forest of sugar maple and Chinquapin oak, scattered with enormous blocks of dolomite that have tumbled from the cliffs above. These boulders are festooned with wild hydrangea, wild ginger and columbine in spring, and zigzag goldenrod and jumpseed in late summer. Walking fern can be found year round, some with offshoots growing from fronds' ends. This tactic of cloning itself has given the fern its name and allows it to colonize its vertical habitat. Scarlet tanagers and migrating warblers abound in spring. Turkey vultures nest in the many shallow overhangs in the cliff above. When disturbed they may fly quietly from the nest, or may remain at the nest and engage in projectile vomiting. The latter habit keeps human visitation near the nests to a minimum.

11 Anywhere along this stretch of trail you may find the supple-branched shrub leatherwood and its neighbor the bladdernut. In spring, yellow lady's slippers steal the show, along with jack-in-the-pulpit, black snakeroot and bellwort. Don't forget to look up at the serpentine line of cliffs beside the trail. Red efts, the larval land stage of the red-spotted newt, also use the trail in spring and fall.

12 Stay alert at the wooden bridge, as minks, raccoons, and opossums often leave scat piles here. Mink scat is thin and tapered and sometimes contains hair, whereas the others are short and rounded and usually contain seeds.

13 At two small footbridges you come to an example of stream piracy. The two streams running under these bridges used to be one, a watercourse flowing to the east. That stream's drainage pattern was changed and its flow reversed, creating two streams that subsequently created Bread Pan Gorge downstream of the bridges. This gorge is deep, providing habitat for Louisiana waterthrushes and excellent spring wildflower displays.

14 You now enter Shivener Prairie, formerly Floyd Shivener's corn patch. This area has been colonized by prairie species typical of Adams County. In spring the flower display is subtle, with golden alexander, rue-anemone, and Seneca snakeroot. The real show comes in summer, with purple blazing star, tall coreopsis, western sunflower, flowering spurge and obedient plant. One of the rarest plants here is the diminutive limestone adder's-tongue fern. Look for its small frond in early summer along the trail's edge. The baby-blue flowers of the shale-barren aster appear in early fall along with the creamy white flowers of the Great Plains ladies' tresses. Continue on the trail through the woods to the old Shivener house site. Follow the lane up the slope to the parking lot.



Directions to Trailhead

From West Union (intersection of St. Rts. 125 and 41), travel on St. Rt. 125 east for 7.2 miles. Take a left on Lynx Road (paved) then take the next left (0.3 mile) on Shivener Road (gravel). Parking lot at the end of Shivener Road.



This loop trail of two and a half miles begins at a small opening in the fence just south of the parking lot. Follow yellow paint blazes on trees.

The Wilderness Trail Map

