

arkansas update & field trips



Harvey Williams says Smith Creek Preserve is his favorite place to hone his photography skills. © Harvey Williams

In clear focus Conservation and business in The Natural State

Conservation, Harvey Williams says, boils down to improving quality of life. Williams, the executive vice president of the Bank of the Ozarks Northwest Arkansas division, also believes that conservation creates a better environment in which businesses can flourish.

“Without conservation, Northwest Arkansas would not be the thriving business center it is today,” he says. “Several years ago, Wal-Mart vendors began setting up offices here. What happened is that the people who moved here went back to their headquarters with stories of how wonderful a place Northwest Arkansas is to live.”

In turn, companies like Proctor & Gamble grew from an office with a few employees to more than 250 employees that live and work in Northwest Arkansas today.

“A big part of why they’re here is because of our clean lakes and rivers, our fresh air and our state and federal parks and preserves,” Williams says. “Our investment in conservation has paid off.”

For Williams, special places like The Nature Conservancy’s Smith Creek Preserve in Newton County add to his quality of life. He’s an avid photographer, and he describes himself as the preserve’s “unofficial volunteer monitor.” He visits the secluded 1,226-acre site about once a month, focusing his camera on the amazing waterfalls that flow over gargantuan boulders in Smith Creek, which continues into Sherfield Cave—a cavern that harbors the largest hibernating population of endangered Indiana bats in Arkansas.

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Fall fun with The Nature Conservancy

Each fall and spring, The Nature Conservancy in Arkansas offers opportunities for members to learn about the conservation work they support and to explore some beautiful areas in the Natural State. Sign up for one or more field trips today, and get ready for a fun time with Conservancy staff and fellow supporters!

Field Trips

September 24: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Crawford Co.]

Frog Bayou/Lake Fort Smith Motorboat Tour

Ride in traditional flat-bottom motorboats from the marina at the new Lake Fort Smith State Park to the Conservancy's wetland conservation easement on the north end of the lake (formed by Frog Bayou) to learn how the Conservancy partnered with the City of Fort Smith and the U.S. Forest Service to ensure no wetland acreage was lost during the expansion of the lake. Bring your lunch; we'll provide drinks. Limited to six people. \$25/person.

September 25: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Crawford Co.]

Frog Bayou/Lake Fort Smith Canoe & Kayak Tour

Paddle in a canoe or kayak from the marina at the new Lake Fort Smith State Park to the Conservancy's wetland conservation easement on the north end of the lake (formed by Frog Bayou) to learn how the Conservancy partnered with the City of Fort Smith and the U.S. Forest Service to ensure no wetland acreage was lost during the expansion of the lake. We'll provide the gear and drinks. Bring your lunch. Limited to six people. \$25/person.

September 26: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Calhoun Co.]

Search for Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers at Moro Big Pine

Representatives from Potlatch, the Conservancy, and the Arkansas Game and Fish and Natural Heritage commissions will lead a walking and driving tour of the 16,000-acre Moro Big Pine Wildlife Management and Natural Area. The tour will include a visit to a red-cockaded woodpecker colony site and stops to learn about the partners' forest management practices. Lunch and drinks will be provided. \$10/person.

October 4: 7 a.m. to Noon [Faulkner Co.]

Birding at Camp Robinson Special Use Area

Search for fall migrating birds with Allan Mueller, the Conservancy's avian conservation project manager. Participants will likely spot warblers, woodpeckers and sparrows and possibly Mississippi kites. Bring your binoculars. We'll provide drinks. Limited to 15 people. \$20/person.

October 10: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Monroe Co.]

Big Woods Canoe Trip on Bayou DeView

Paddle among the cypresses and tupelos on slow-moving Bayou DeView. Spend the day learning about the region's diverse flora and fauna, including the 265 species of birds that migrate through the Big Woods each fall. We'll provide the gear and drinks. Bring your lunch. \$65/person.

October 17: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. [Saline Co.]

Help Clean the Saline

Join us on a canoe float with a purpose: we'll pick up trash while experiencing the beauty of the Saline River and learning about the Conservancy's work in the watershed. During *normal flows*, the 4-mile float (from the North Fork to the I-30 bridge) is an easy one. Gear and drinks are provided. Bring your lunch. Limited to 16 people. No charge.

October 25: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Pope Co.]

Ozark Fall Colors and Woodland Restoration Project

Fall colors are usually at their best during late October. Join us for a van tour and light hiking through the Ozark National Forest's Big Piney Ranger District, where the U.S. Forest Service and its partners are restoring the oak woodland ecosystem using fire and ecological thinning. Bring your lunch; we'll provide drinks. Limited to 10 people. \$10/person.

October 31: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Newton Co.]

Nature Walk and Picnic at Smith Creek Preserve

Join Conservancy staff and friends to explore the 1,226-acre Smith Creek Preserve near Boxley Valley and the Buffalo National River. Fall colors should be fantastic, and you'll be able to choose from two hikes—one will be quite strenuous and the other will be an easy walk along beautiful Smith Creek, which flows into Sherfield Cave. Four-wheeled-drive vehicles strongly recommended. Bring lunch and a bottle for water we'll provide. \$20/person.

Upcoming Events

October 11—The Arkansas Forestry Commission, along with the Conservancy and the Arkansas Forestry Association as well as the Arkansas Game and Fish and Natural Heritage commissions, will host a **forestry clinic** at Poison Springs State Forest to help landowners and foresters set management objectives for their land. Topics of discussion will include natural history and ecology, wildlife management, timber marketing and best management practices for logging. For more information, contact Joe Fox at (501) 614-5089 or jfox@tnc.org.

October 11—The Conservancy will staff a booth at the Arkansas Sustainability Network's **Natural State Expo 2008 Green Home Show**, which will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the

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In clear focus

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“Smith Creek is a gorgeous and pristine place,” Williams says. “The solitude of Smith Creek is something I’ve become addicted to. I do a lot of photography by myself, and I can go there and spend as much time on a particular shot as I need to.”

Williams and his wife, Terri, started a tradition of visiting a new Conservancy preserve each year. In May the couple spent a week at the Conservancy’s Bear Mountain Lodge in southwest New Mexico, watching birds and photographing at nearby natural areas, including the Conservancy’s Gila Riparian Preserve.

“We probably saw 50 different kinds of wildflowers, and we added 83 birds to our list,” Williams says. “We went on guided hikes and learned a tremendous amount from the lodge’s naturalist. It gives me a lot of satisfaction to be involved with an organization that does good work all around the world.”

Back in Arkansas, Williams is doing his part to promote the Conservancy’s work. He’s been a Conservancy member for more than five years, and he’s actively involved in launching the Northwest Arkansas chapter of Green Growth, a group aimed at cultivating and engaging the next generation of Nature Conservancy supporters.

“You’ve got to create that new wave of people who have an interest in conservation,” Williams says. “Young people have lots of energy and passion, and as they mature in their careers and build influence and wealth, they’ll already be in the habit of supporting conservation.”

Bank of the Ozarks, Williams says, is committed to supporting Green Growth. Three years ago, Bank of the Ozarks also joined the Corporate Council for Conservation, a coalition of more than 100 of the state’s leading corporations that support the Conservancy’s work throughout Arkansas.

“As business people—good corporate citizens—we have to be interested in the communities in which we work,” Williams says. “It should be a badge of honor for a business to be part of the Corporate Council for Conservation.” ■



Harvey Williams (above) in his backyard, where he enjoys photographing birds. Photo courtesy of Harvey Williams

Upcoming Events (continued from page two)

Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. The event will showcase green building and remodeling supplies; natural product alternatives for every room; and simple, everyday actions that families can take to green their home. The event will also include exhibitor booths, youth activities, a marketplace and more. For information, visit www.naturalstateexpo.org or call (501) 372-6996.

November 1—The Conservancy and its partners will host a **Landowner Incentive Program workshop** at Gurdon for private landowners interested in the safe and effective use of prescribed fire to improve wildlife habitat. Space is limited. To register or for more information, contact Jason Milks at (501) 614-5080 or jmilks@tnc.org.

November 6—The Conservancy will host its **6th annual Northwest Arkansas Conservation Partners Luncheon** at the Springdale Country Club to honor members of the Corporate Council for Conservation, a business coalition that supports the environment and provides annual funding for the Conservancy’s work in the Natural State. This year’s guest speaker is Betsy Cohen, vice president of sustainability for Nestlé. For more information, contact Susan Lancaster at (479) 973-9110 or slancaster@tnc.org. ■

Doing good business

To provide its member businesses more opportunities to become engaged in the work they support, The Nature Conservancy in Arkansas recently revamped the structure of its Corporate Council for Conservation. The Conservancy encourages you to visit nature.org/arkansas and select “Corporate Support” to learn more about these opportunities and how support from the business community is vital to the conservation of the Natural State’s natural lands and water.

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Field Trip Registration

(Please note: Field trips are non-refundable.)

Details will be sent to registrants prior to each field trip. Kindly let us know if you must cancel so someone else may have your spot.

Name _____ Phone _____
Street Address _____ E-mail _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date	Trip	No. in party	Per person	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 24	Frog Bayou Motorboat Tour	_____	x \$25 =	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 25	Frog Bayou Paddling Tour	_____	x \$25 =	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 26	Moro Big Pine Tour	_____	x \$10 =	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> October 4	Birding at Camp Robinson	_____	x \$20 =	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> October 10	Canoeing on Bayou DeView	_____	x \$65 =	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> October 17	Canoeing and Cleaning the Saline	_____		Free
<input type="checkbox"/> October 25	Fall Colors/Woodlands Restoration Tour	_____	x \$10 =	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> October 31	Smith Creek Nature Walk	_____	x \$20 =	\$ _____
Total payment enclosed (non-refundable)				\$ _____

Make check payable to: The Nature Conservancy • 601 North University Avenue • Little Rock, AR 72205

Credit card payment (check one): VISA MasterCard American Express Discover
Name (as it appears on credit card) _____ Amount _____
Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

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