



Issue 39 | January 2026

Just as ripples spread when a single pebble is dropped into water, the actions of individuals can have far-reaching impact. *The Ripple* is a special newsletter created by Cincinnati Nature Center for people looking for ideas and support in their efforts to protect nature.

GET INSPIRED!



Get Inspired: Cheryl Vargas— Responsible for the Footwork

Article by Connie O'Connor

How did a retired emergency room physician come to be a respected native plant advocate? And what does it say about the power of lifelong learning?

Click below to read the full story!

[Click to Read More](#)

YOU'RE INVITED!

Neighbors in the Know



A Series of Online Talks for a Strong Clermont



Neighbors in the Know: A Series of Online Talks for a Strong Clermont

Wednesdays, February 18, March 18, April 15, May 20, June 17, September 16, October 21, and November 18, 6–7:30 pm

This live online series empowers residents of Clermont County's fourteen townships to become informed, confident advocates for change in their communities. Learn from public officials and administrators, and explore how decisions are made that impact the quality and character of our communities—all from the comfort of your home!

Reserve your spot per session, or save with one low price for the entire series!

Per Session: Member adult \$10; nonmember adult \$10.

Entire Series: Member adult or nonmember adult \$50.

[Click to Register](#)



The Ripple Effect Course: Unlocking Our Power to Protect Nature (In-person)

Wednesday, April 22, 29, May 6, 13, 20, 4–6 pm at Rowe Woods

Through five in-person sessions and self-guided online resources like podcasts, videos, and articles, we'll pool collective knowledge, grow our optimism, and explore which actions have the greatest potential to protect nature. We'll discuss how to have conversations about conservation that foster understanding rather than polarization.

Connie O'Connor, Cincinnati Nature Center Director of Applied Learning, invites 24 dedicated nature lovers to register for this special course as we learn together, grow our

impact, and plan ways to make a real difference for the natural world. **The journey begins on Earth Day 2026!**

Preregistration required. Member adult \$125; nonmember adult \$135.

[Click to Register](#)

LEARN MORE TO DO MORE

Creating a Connected Life: Six Points of Connection

Grounded in extensive research across fields like psychology, healthcare, sociology, and urban planning, these six points address what is needed to be part of a thriving community.

Watch this 45-minute overview of the Six Points of Connection that happy people build to have lives of purpose, connection, and impact.

[Click to Learn More](#)

When Convenience Costs Connection

Real connection is messy, slow, uncomfortable—it's also what keeps us alive. Click below to read the full article by Amanda E. White, LPC of *The Preamble*.

[Click to Read](#)

How to Move Beyond Outrage Toward Understanding

Kurt Gray believes that by shifting our thinking from right and wrong to “harm,” we can feel less outrage and understand each other better. Click below to read the full article by Sahar Habib Ghazi of *Greater Good Magazine*.

[Click to Read](#)

Ground Up Advocacy Bootcamp

Want to make real, lasting change on your campus or in your community to combat climate change and biodiversity loss? Click below to learn more!

[Click to Learn More](#)

What Does an Emotionally Regulated Adult Look Like?

A new book by Marc Brackett explains how learning the skill of emotion regulation can help us build a better life. Click below to read the full article by Kira M. Newman and Marc Brackett of *Greater Good Magazine*.

[Click to Read](#)

OCVN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reminder: As *The Ripple* e-newsletter evolves, all future volunteer opportunities and OCVN announcements will now be shared via the [OCVN Cincinnati Nature Center Facebook Group](#). Please request to join to see or share content within this private group.

[Click to Join!](#)

NOTES FROM OUR READERS

Should You Throw It Away?

A Read and Listen Recommendation by Connie O'Connor

In a recent [Science Friday](#) podcast, author of *Waste Wars: The Wild Afterlife of Your Trash*, Alexander Clapp, explains a controversial stance on plastic: throw it away.

[Click to Listen](#)

If this topic intrigues you, you may also want to read *Untangling Plastics: The Missing Link in Mitigating Climate Change* by Bob Gedert—practical steps for a healthier planet.

If you'd like to organize a discussion group on these books, Cincinnati Nature Center can promote it in the upcoming March issue of *The Ripple*. Please email **Connie O'Connor** at coconnor@cincynature.org with your announcement.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Conservation Civics: Volunteers Needed

Cincinnati Nature Center's Director of Applied Learning Connie O'Connor seeks volunteers with specific skills to help advance projects related to *Conservation Civics*:

- **Online course assistance:** If you are familiar with "[Articulate](#)" course authoring software, your help is needed to translate material from a Powerpoint presentation to an interactive Articulate module.
- **Videography:** If you are experienced filming and editing videos, and have the basic equipment and software to do so, your help is needed to produce short instructional videos featuring Connie's lectures.

If you're interesting and would like to learn more, please contact **Connie O'Connor** at coconnor@cincynature.org.

Give Us Your Feedback

You're receiving this action-oriented newsletter because you signed up for it, because you are a graduate of the Nature Center's Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program, or because you have completed *The Ripple Effect* online course.

Wouldn't it be great if everyone had better information about ways to act (and inspire others to act) for conservation? **Take a minute to share this electronic digest with your friends**—they'll thank you for it!

If someone forwarded you this newsletter and you want to become a regular subscriber, [click here](#).

If you have suggestions for content or have other input, contact the Director of Applied Learning Connie O'Connor at coconnor@cincynature.org.

If you want to unsubscribe, please [click here](#).



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