

History and Memories of TREE

TREE was initiated in 1999 to coordinate the efforts of the Environmental Educators within Franklin County. The goal was to collaborate on workshops and programs, as well as to share information, ideas and resources with each other. We continue this today - over 25 years later



TREE Memories – First 10 Years: 1999 – 2009

Initial Letter was sent in January 1999 and the first meeting was held on February 2, 1999 at the Metro Park's Spring Hollow. The invitation was sent to 17 people.

An excerpt from the initial letter and minutes follows:

Happy New Year! It is my New Year's Resolution to try to coordinate the efforts of the Environmental Educators within Franklin County. I met with some educators at the SCWD annual planning meeting and it was a consensus that this would be a good idea – Let's see how it works.

Environmental Educators of Franklin County did not have a great ring to it, and “The group with no name” was not very specific, so after much brainstorming (see choices below) our name was chosen at the Dec 2, 1999 meeting (notice it was not on the initial list)!

Central	Central	The	Team of	Ohio
Ohio	Ohio	Resources for	Educators for the	Resource
Resource	Resource	Environmental	Environment and	Education
Network	Providers	Educators	Conservation in the	Organization
			Heart of Ohio	

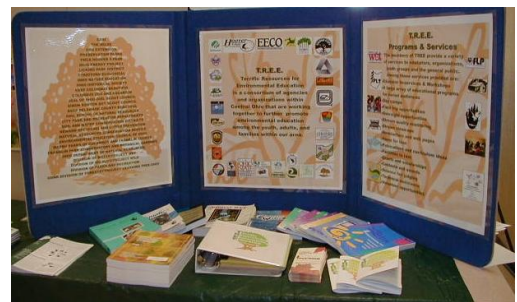
Central	A	Central	Central	Central
Ohio	Central	Ohio	Ohio	Ohio
Consortium of	Ohio	Mentoring of	Network of	Nurturing
Outdoor	Resource	Ohio	Information	Network of
Opportunities in	Network	Teaching	For	Environmental Educators
Nature			Environmental	Collaborating
			Resources	Together

March 2000 –developed our first booklet

April 2000 – presented TREE information and TREE BINGO at an EECO Conference

October 2000 – sponsored presentations by singer and song writer David Stokes at BOO at the Zoo

October 2001 – TREE presentation at Central In-service Day at Vets Memorial



May 2002 – TREE meeting at Dawes Arboretum, including a tour
September 2002 – TREE meeting at Indian Village Day Camp

January 2003 - we started the \$10 annual dues

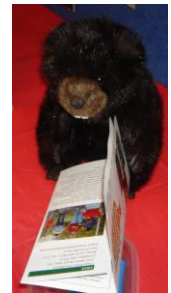
June 2003 - The National Science Foundation Grant was approved to compare TREE to TAM (Tucson Area Museums) in January. 8 of us traveled to Tucson to meet with their group for 4 days!



October 2003 – 5 of us attended the NAAEE Conference in Anchorage Alaska, as a part of the NSF grant with the Tucson group.

September 2004 – Dr. Joe Heimlich provided a Program Modeling training session for TREE and EECO members.

April 2005 – We had an idea and activity sharing session at our meeting at ODNR: Division of Wildlife



October 2006 – We created the TREE brochure instead of the cumbersome booklet that we had difficulty keeping up to date and in alphabetical order!

September 2007 – Met at the Dublin Arts Council to experience the Ripple Effect project



Spring 2008 – Through the efforts and coordination of Mime Migliore, TREE partnered on the Ohio Certified Naturalist Program for Central Ohio



August 2008 – Field trip to the WILDS!

November 2008 – Trip to the Landfill

... 2009 – new adventures to come!

TREE Memories – Second 10 Years (2009-2019)

Field trips to each other's organizations continued to be a highlight of our quarterly meetings.

Highlights of some of our field trips include:

May 2009 we explored Cedar Bog



September 2010- we visited the Ohio Wildlife Center.

September 2011- We experienced Stratford Ecological Center's new program Sunship Earth.



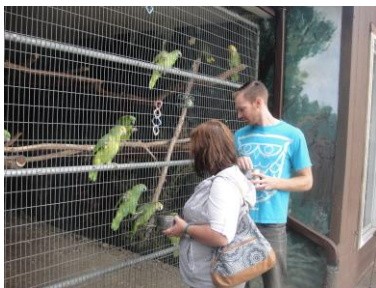
October 2012 – Dawes Arboretum



April 2013 – Batelle Darby



September 2014 – Hartman Aviary and Walnut Creek Outdoor Learning Center



September 2015 - Columbus Zoo and Aquarium's Heart of Africa exhibit



October 2016 – Ohio EPA Green Roof Tour



August 2018 - AHA! A Hands-on Children's Museum



Trainings and Presentations at meetings included:

March 2011: Windows on Waste and Population Connections trainings by Marti Kolb at ODNR

April 2012 – COSI water exhibit & explanation of new science standards by Mary Ann Wojton

June 2014 – Batelle Darby Metro Park, presentation on identifying meth labs in the field

May 2018 – Franklin Park Conservatory to explore new Children's Garden.

-Had presentation on Working with Children with Autism in a Camp Setting

April 2019 First virtual meeting through Google Hangout

Reaching 25 years 2020-2024

ZOOM meetings were our way of keeping together in 2020 and 2021. We continue to meet virtually on occasion because this provides a way to get together and share ideas even when schedules are too busy to meet in person.

September 2020 –We had teachers provide insight on their needs during the pandemic school yr

August 2021 we held our first hybrid meeting at the Proctor Center.



December 2021 – hybrid meeting at Columbus Zoo and Aquarium to visit new Education Building

June 2022 – Deer Haven Preservation Park – visit Aviary and hear about agreement with Ohio Nature Education



August 2022 – The Works



February 2023 – Dawes Arboretum for the Avian Avatars and program by Ohio Canid Association with a wolf ambassador

August 2023 – Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

December 2023 – SWACO Landfill Tour **August 2024** -Butterfly Ridge Conservation Area





Celebrating 25 years of TREE and looking forward to many more!! Moving Beyond 25 years 2025-

The group has grown from it's original 17 people invited in 1999 to nearly 40 organizations, involving over 200 individuals. With this variety of organizations there are many places to visit, so in 2025 it was decided to meet monthly, instead of quarterly. We also are scheduling more field trips to places across Ohio to gain information and ideas from across the state.

Highlights from field trips and meetings include:

February 2025 – SWACO for a landfill tour and see updates to their education building



May 2025 – to visit Butterfly Ridge Conservation Area during a different season

June 2025 – Mid-Ohio Food Collection Farm on the Hilltop for a tour of all the amazing growing techniques they incorporate



July 30, 2025 – Franklin Park Conservatory to hear about their education programming and visit the Nature in Legos Exhibit



August 2025 – Shale Hollow Preservation Park to see their Life on a Leaf exhibit

September 2025 – ODNR: Geological Survey, Horace Collins Lab for a tour and a presentation on the Ohio Seismic Network



November 2025 – Rumpke Recycling Center – for a tour of this new facility



December 2025 – Columbus Zoo and Aquarium – with a tour of the newly renovated North America exhibits. Members were welcome to stay after for Wildlights.



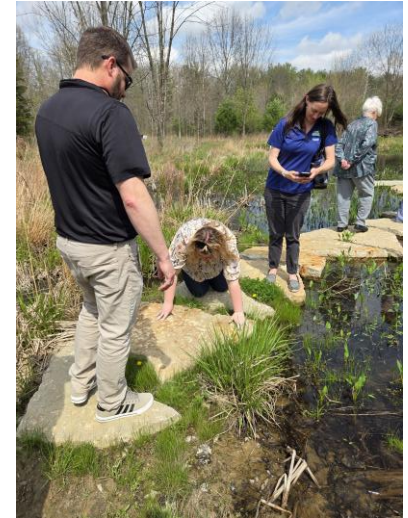
February 2026 – we met at Lead the Way Learning to discuss possible collaborations to introduce high school students to career opportunities

April 2026 - at Spruce Run Ecological Center of Columbus City Schools to take a tour of the facility and learn of partnering opportunities.



May 2026 – at Ohio Bird Sanctuary for a tour of their facility.

June 2026 – Blendon Woods Metro Park to see the newly renovated Nature Center and the Inclusive Playground



July 2026 - Inniswood Metro Garden to hear the history of this park and tour the gardens, focusing on the summer “Americana” theme.



With many more exciting adventures and explorations planned for the future!!