



# Annual Report 2018



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Dear Friends,

We are pleased to report Owl's Hill experienced another good year in spite of weather challenges Mother Nature threw our way. School field trips, family and adult programming, summer and break camps, outreach programs in schools and the community, and volunteer opportunities all helped connect almost 10,000 individuals with nature and Owl's Hill Nature Sanctuary in 2018.

Our mantra continues to be...Get outside! Unplug and recharge at Owl's Hill.

Today, more than ever, children are spending more time indoors connected to personal devices than they are experiencing all the great outdoors has to offer. In *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, Richard Louv shares research that indicates there are many benefits for children who play frequently in nature, including increased creativity and ability to concentrate, resilience to stress, better scores in school, improved fitness and coordination, and overall good health. For many children, Owl's Hill is their first hands-on experience with nature. Students, teachers and chaperones on field trips to Owl's Hill spent nearly 6,400 hours "unplugged." Break and summer camps were strong with 953 campers logging more than 7,600 outdoor hours.

In response to your feedback, we took a critical look at our trail-system. We closed and/or rerouted trails that were eroded, underutilized, or just plain confusing. Day Passes and annual Rambler Passes are now available on-line so more visitors can experience the beauty and serenity of Owl's Hill. More than 700 volunteers contributed 2,300+ hours working with staff leading guided hikes, helping with public programming, managing invasive plant species and tackling Phase 1 of our Trail Renovation Project.

Workshops and classes, led by local favorites Janet Lanier, Rachael McCampbell and Susan VanDyke, interwove art and nature. Our *Music in the Meadow* summer series featured Anthony Adams & The Night Owls, Barrett Baber and Fairgrounds Saints.

After a week of unprecedented rain, the skies cleared just in time for our inaugural *Dinner in the Forest* fundraiser. Limited to only 150 guests to provide a truly unique outdoor dining experience, the event was a huge success under the leadership of co-chairs Llew Ann King and Mimi Heldman, raising \$50,000 to provide vital unrestricted operating support.

The ongoing support of our donors, annual pass holders, volunteers, program sponsors, foundations and education partners truly makes Owl's Hill a special place for the school groups, teachers, families and visitors we serve each year. On behalf of the board, our dedicated staff and volunteers, we thank you for joining us in this worthwhile effort.

Sincerely,



Susan B. Duvenhage  
President and Executive Director



Dr. Charles E. Smith  
Chairman, Board of Directors

## We've Grown!

On September 11, 175 acres that run along a tree-covered ridge of the Sugg family farm were officially transferred to Owl's Hill Nature Sanctuary, expanding our protected habitat to just over 300 acres. A bequest gift of longtime Owl's Hill friend and former board member Mary Ann Sugg and her brother John T. Sugg III, the property is located at the corner of Beech Creek Road and Murray Lane.

Stay tuned for more news in the coming year.

# Environmental Education

## Schools & Scouts

Owl's Hill is all too often a child's first close-up encounter with natural habitats. Children and teachers from **10 Middle Tennessee school districts** representing **78 schools** came to Owl's Hill to learn, explore and get outside. Research continues to show that exposure to nature and the outdoors is essential for developing a child's physical and emotional health.

A special collaboration with the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee Council brought **100 scouts and leaders** to "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them." This year's completed Eagle Scout projects included: cyclone fence removal in a riparian zone (Simon Bashour, Troop 1), picnic tables & benches (Tyler Myers, Troop 93), 10 bluebird nesting boxes (James Duncan, Troop 621), fossil station renovation (Asher Tabor, Troop 1), 150 feet of trail rerouting (Zach Edgerton, Troop 37).



## Camps

Spring Break Exploratoria returned and Summer Camp was an action-packed **8 weeks** of exploration. **953 campers** spent **7,624 hours** exploring, discovering and connecting with nature.

Guest instructors joined us from Walden's Puddle, MetroWater and Vanderbilt University bringing animal ambassadors, watershed demonstrations and teaching older campers a few veterinary skills - stitches, injections and how to start an IV for fluids.

This year's Counselors-In-Training learned valuable leadership skills and responsibility. They were led by experienced Camp Counselors.

## Outdoor Program Days

We went **Batty for Bats** in the spring teaming up with the Nature Conservancy's Karst Program Director, Cory Holliday. **100 participants** learned all about this secretive, nocturnal flying mammal, dispelled myths and built new bat houses providing shelter for **potentially 3,000 bats**.

There are always new topics to learn about, so we piloted **Nature Matters** - partnering with local experts to present on topics ranging from the impending impact of the Emerald Ash Borer to the Mighty Monarchs and Gardening for Pollinators.



Art and Nature are interwoven at Owl's Hill. **Art Workshops** explored traditional basket weaving, randomweave bird houses, still life, watercolors and...Painting for the Fun of It!



## OWL'S HILL BY THE NUMBERS

### EDUCATION PROGRAMS

**3,524** school children and **736** teachers impacted through school programs

**6,707 hours** schools children spent outdoors exploring the natural world

**211** scouts completed badge requirements

**953** campers registered for camp programs

Campers spent **7,624 hours** unplugged in nature.

### OUTDOOR PROGRAM DAYS & VISITORS

**9,057** Visitors spent **22,121 hours** at Owl's Hill connecting with nature

Visitors to Owl's Hill **18 Tennessee counties** and **16 States**

**113** Outdoor Program Days

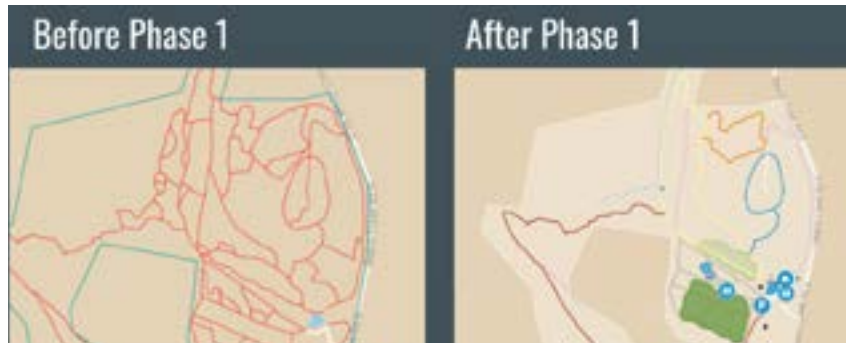
**3,240** people participating in Owl's Hill programs

# Stewardship: Land and Wildlife

Protecting old growth forest, controlling invasive species and studying nest box, butterfly and bird populations are some of the ways we ensure a healthy and vibrant ecosystem. Owl's Hill is committed to cultivating conservation partnerships as well as educating and engaging individuals and organizations to become lifelong stewards of nature.

## Trails

"I feel lost." "I'm not sure which trail I'm on." "The trails are unnerving." Those were just some of the comments we heard from first- and long-time visitors. You spoke and we listened. A top priority this year was redesigning our trails to provide a safe and enjoyable trek through nature, while protecting fragile habitats and wildlife. Staff and a **team of 43 volunteer Trail Keepers and Scouts** generously gave **250 service hours** toward closing, rerouting and blazing trails in Phase 1 of our trail renovation project. We now have an updated user-friendly map corresponding to color-blazed trails through some of our beautiful habitats. More reroutes and more trails are on the docket for Phase 2 next year.



## Habitat Restoration

Invasive species including Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), Japanese bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*), Nepalese browntop (*Microstegium vimineum*) have overtaken native populations. The greatest threat posed by these species is large-scale ecosystem modification. This past year, **230 students** from Belmont University, Lipscomb University, Nashville Christian School, Girl Scout Troops and **67 corporate partner volunteers** helped remove invasive plant species from the property. And, we can't forget our Weed Wrangle friends and individual volunteers!

## Citizen Science

Conservation often requires studious and consistent data recording and keeping. This year, we consolidated **over 20 years of nestbox data** and species count data from various paper and electronic sources. Our Citizen Science projects benefit Cornell University's NestWatch Program, the North American Butterfly Association, and the University of Minnesota's Monarch Larva Monitoring Project and statewide groups like the Tennessee Ornithological Society.

Many thanks to our dedicated volunteers who monitored and recorded data for these important population studies for the past 20 years! Special thanks to our special project volunteers who took on data consolidation to turn our data into something that can be understood and shared.



## HABITAT RESTORATION & TRAILS

**175** acres added to the Sanctuary for a total of 302 forever green and protected native acres.

**620** feet of trail rerouted

**136** birds fledged from nest box study trail

**658** service hours removing invasive species completed by 14 community groups

**300** Native Trees Planted (Buttonbush, Roughleaf Dogwood, Persimmon, Red Oak, Ninebark, Sycamore)

**476** butterflies recorded representing 30 different species

# Thank You to Our 2018 Donors

Many thanks to all our donors including **Great Horned Owl Society** members, foundations, businesses and other supporters. The following gifts of \$100 or more were received between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018.

## INDIVIDUALS

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**Dane Andersen and Mary Pemberton**  
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TBH Global Asset Management  
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## DINNER IN THE FOREST

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Colleen and Roger Nagy  
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Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Rolfe  
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**Underwriting Support**  
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## TRIBUTE GIFTS

In Honor of Jean Buchanan  
Paula and Robert Snyder

In Honor of Margaret Cameron  
James Nance  
Dr. Margaret Smith

In Honor of J. Randy Cromer  
Karen and Paul Isaac

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Darci Pool  
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Gail Bell  
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Randy Tarkington  
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In Honor of Dr. Morel Enoch Harvey  
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Zoe Hopeman

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Dr. Alix Weiss Sharp

In Honor of Llew Ann King  
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Allen DeCuyper and Steve Sirls  
Michael Gaster  
Nancy and Rea Huston

In Honor of Mariann and Andrew McCoy  
Virginia A. McCoy

In Honor of Corinne Porada  
Faye Porada  
Patricia Porada

In Honor of Robert Raguso  
Timothy Hays

In Honor of Finley Rand  
Christopher Rand

In Honor of Karen and Rogers  
Elizabeth Crockett

In Honor of Dr. Charles Smith  
Mr. and Mrs. A. David Martin

In Honor of Ken Schubring  
**Betsy and George Crossley**

## MEMORIAL GIFTS

In Memory of Jack Ansley "Mr. Bluebird"  
Ms. Sue D. Ansley

In Memory of Bennie Batson  
John Batson  
Nancy and George Garden

In Memory of Steve Benneyworth  
Anne Knauff  
Robert H. Tosh

In Memory of Ernest L. Edwards and Amelia Whitsitt Edwards  
Mr. and Mrs. William Edwards

In Memory of Bob Francis  
Brenda Martin

In Memory of Sara Holcomb  
Elizabeth and Dave Lemke

In Memory of Pamela Johnson  
Teresa and David Barry

In Memory of Walter Mears  
Amy Mears

In Memory of Lee Peterson  
Danielle Peterson

In Memory of Shawna Lea Hickerson Smith  
Diane and Michael Gower  
Kerrie and John T. Johnson  
Jean and Wayne Qualls  
Linda Ramsey  
Jean and Jim Turbeville

In Memory of Ruth Inman Hardiman Schubring  
**George and Betsy Crossley**

In Memory of Mary Ann Sugg  
Jean and David Buchanan  
Ms. Pat Maffei

In Memory of Sarah Sharp Taylor  
Joe and Mary Margaret Alsobrooks Peel

## IN-KIND GIFTS

bighthouse graphix, llc  
Belle Forest Animal Hospital  
Jean and David Buchanan  
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Allan Coggins  
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# VOLUNTEERS: 735 INDIVIDUALS

Owl's Hill depends on our volunteers to carry out mission by leading nature hikes, outdoor programs, restoring native habitat, rerouting and repairing trails and...weeding . These groups and individuals gave **2,337 hours** of their time and talent to Owl's Hill in 2018. To all of them, we give our sincere gratitude and appreciation.

### 20+ Volunteer Hours

Benny Ayers	Lee Kirkpatrick
David Coats	Trish Kittrell
Tim Dalton	Susan Leathers
Mary Healy	David Ogden
Mimi Heldman	Margaret Smith
Llew Ann King	Cindy Whitt

### 50+ Volunteer Hours

Dane Andersen	Leo Honeycutt
Claire Boggess	Margaret Howell
Sharron Francis	Alex McClory
Claudia Gifford	Jamie Shimanti
Richard Hitt	

### 100+ Volunteer Hours

Emma Brown  
Jean Buchanan  
Denis Lovell  
Alec Mathers-Burk  
Ella McClory



# Statement of Operating Activity

For the years ended September 30, 2017 and 2018 (prior to audit)

## REVENUE AND SUPPORT

	2018	2017
Programs	\$95,815	\$89,884
Contributions	\$150,056	\$1,336,005*
Sponsorships and Grants	\$117,206	\$74,338
Investment Distribution designated for Operations	\$48,000	\$78,082
Other Income	\$5,982	\$1,696
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$417,059</b>	<b>\$1,580,005</b>

## EXPENSES

	2018	2017
Personnel	\$225,024	\$219,910
Education Programming	\$23,793	\$37,579
Facilities, Trails and Ground	\$28,087	\$18,215
Management and General	\$69,748	\$68,771
Development and Events	\$32,045	\$12,987
Marketing and Advertising	\$5,598	\$7,703
Retail and Supporting Services	\$0	\$960
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$384,295</b>	<b>\$366,125</b>

## OTHER

	2018	2017
Investment Income and Change in FMV	\$72,484	\$53,808
Capital Expenditures	\$0	(\$2,788)
Depreciation Expense	(\$15,050)	(\$28,972)
Investment Management Expense	(\$10,898)	(\$10,655)
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$46,536</b>	<b>\$11,393</b>

## Statement of Financial Position (9/30/2018)

### Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$145,285
Accounts Receivable	\$1,144,550
Prepaid Expenses	\$2,800
Property and Equipment	\$805,724
Investments	\$1,256,486
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$3,354,845</b>

### Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expense	\$7,294
Advance Program Fees	\$2,401
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$9,695</b>

### Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$3,254,955
Change in Net Assets	\$90,196
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$3,345,151</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$3,354,845</b>

\* includes one-time bequest gifts of cash and land totaling \$1,237,500



*Cladonia cristatella* / British Soldier Lichen  
Photo Credit: Richard Hitt



# Owl's Hill

NATURE SANCTUARY

545 Beech Creek Road South  
Brentwood, TN 37027

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



photo credit: Mary Deaton Heldman

## DINNER IN THE FOREST



One hundred fifty guests ventured into the woods for our inaugural fundraising event. It was an enchanted evening under the starlit skies on May 5, 2018.

### **Dinner in the Forest returns late Spring 2019**

For information about sponsorship opportunities or host tickets, contact [giving@owlshill.org](mailto:giving@owlshill.org).

### **Heartfelt Thanks to the 2018**

#### **Dinner in the Forest Committee:**

Llew Ann King & Mimi Heldman, Co-Chairs  
Sharron Francis  
Claudia Gifford  
Kerrie Johnson  
Martha Larkin  
Susan Leathers

