



Chris Bedal, photographer

## Buzzardroost Rock

Buzzardroost Rock is named for the turkey and black vultures, or buzzards, frequently seen soaring over or roosting on the rock and associated cliffs. This rock promontory is comprised of dolomite, a type of limestone that is the fossilized remains of an ancient reef-like structure that flourished in a warm, shallow sea some 350 million years ago. The rock is situated nearly 500 feet above the level of Ohio Brush Creek and provides an outstanding view of the Ohio Brush Creek Valley. The trail to Buzzardroost Rock passes through a number of plant communities and provides the opportunity to witness the region's diverse geologic history.

The trail traverses four separate rock strata including Crab Orchard Shale (gentle slopes with red cedar), Lilly Bisher and Peebles dolomites (cliffs and steep slopes with oak-maple forests), and Ohio Black Shale (Appalachian oak forest dominated by chestnut oak). Buzzardroost Rock provides habitat for a number of rare prairie species including the state endangered plains muhlenbergia grass. The trail to Buzzardroost begins at a parking lot at the eastern end of Weaver Road. The hike is moderate to strenuous, with a round trip distance of 3.4 miles.

### Directions to Buzzardroost Rock

*From West Union travel east on State Route 125 for 6.7 miles to Weaver Road (first road after Ohio Brush Creek). Turn left on Weaver and go .9 miles to trailhead parking lot on the right.*

## The Wilderness

Purchased in 1968, The Wilderness is one of the larger expanses of unbroken forest in the preserve system. Named for the impression it gives, The Wilderness is a mix of forest communities from Appalachian forest types to the globally rare White Cedar Bluffs. Remnant prairie communities also persist along cliff edges and narrow ridges underlain with Peebles dolomite. Untouched by glaciers, dolomite cliffs rise from the forest floor and deep shaded ravines provide a backdrop for outstanding spring wildflower displays. Remnant prairie openings flower in late summer and are followed by exceptional opportunities for fall foliage viewing.

This preserve contains over 50 rare plant and animal species, and 3 plant communities that are considered globally rare. The 1,200 acre preserve contains one of only two sites in Ohio for endangered Canby's mountain lover (a plant) and one of the few sites of the rare limestone adders-tongue fern. The 3.3 mile Wilderness loop trail is a moderate walk and links several routes originally laid out by two preserve founders, the late Richard and Lucile Durrell. The Preserve was named in their honor.

### Directions to The Wilderness

*From West Union travel east on State Route 125 for 8.8 miles and turn left on Lynx Road (paved). Go .3 miles to Shivener Road (gravel) and turn left, proceed to parking lot and trailhead at end of road.*



Wilderness Trees