

## **Wood County, Ohio: Wintergarden/St. John's Woods Nature Preserve!**

In a snow covered forest a group of forest lovers happily hiked through the newest addition to the Old-Growth Forest Network on February 9. Wintergarden/St. John's Woods Nature Preserve in Bowling Green, Ohio was brought into the Network largely through the efforts of Roger Mazzarella, the Wood County coordinator for Old-Growth Forest Network. Mazzarella, who also volunteers for the Nature Preserve, became interested in putting Wintergarden into the Network after meeting Joan Maloof, at a symposium in Cleveland more than two years ago. Mazzarella has worked since then along with staff members of the Nature Preserve to complete the process.

Wintergarden, which encompasses 103 acres of woods, wetlands, meadow and other ecosystems, boasts dominant tree species including red oak, white oak and shagbark hickory, some of which are between 250 to 300 years old.

This is the second forest in Ohio to be added to Old-Growth Forest Network. County Coordinators are working to bring in other forests. Nearby in Fulton County, Ryan Schroeder is working on Goll Woods as a candidate and in Lucas County, Karen Menard is helping to bring in Secor Metropark.

In April, Joan Maloof will be returning to Ohio to dedicate Fort Hill Earth Works and Nature Preserve in Highland County. It has taken steady effort for 3 years to move this forest through the process. There will be a celebration on April 19.