



Naturewise Columbus

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

GROWING

CONNECTIONS

TO NATURE





STORIES OF NATURE IN COLUMBUS

A FEW WORDS FROM BETTINA

So much has taken shape in our second year of Naturewise Columbus, founded to publish Ribbit! Magazine as a free resource for our community. New relationships, growing support, and a vision shared by people who care about children, nature, and learning. As we increased our print run from those early beginnings, we started to see the impact of a free nature magazine in our city. It reaches children who might not otherwise have access to nature, brings local nature into classrooms and homes, and makes learning feel easy and inviting. Teachers told us they are using Ribbit! free classroom sets for nonfiction reading, science connections, literacy support, and many other ways that fit their educational needs.

We are happy to share how our work is developing, and the many ways it is supporting children, families and educators throughout our community. This report pulls together a year of seeds planted. Some of those moments show up in these pages. Not all of them. But enough to give a sense of how this is beginning to take root across Columbus.

With gratitude and excitement,

Bettina Cooper

Bettina Cooper,
Executive Director and
Production Manager



WWW.RIBBITMAGAZINE.COM



OUR BOARD AND ADVISORS

Board of Directors

Tara Sikora, Educator
Board President

Geena Soliz, Family Therapist
Board Secretary

Jessica Dickson, Environmental Scientist
Board Treasurer

Glen Delaney, Ecological Economist

Dr. Chelsea Korfel, Biologist

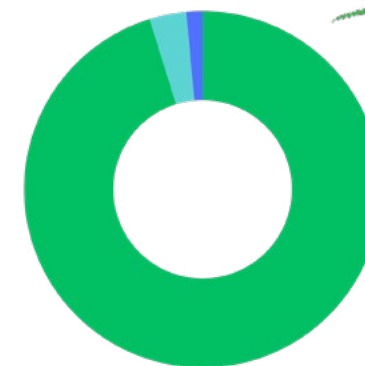
Advisory Council

Cody Berkebile,
Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks

STEM Impact Collaborative,
The Ohio State University

Dr. Edwina Teye,
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
(MORPC)

FINANCIALS

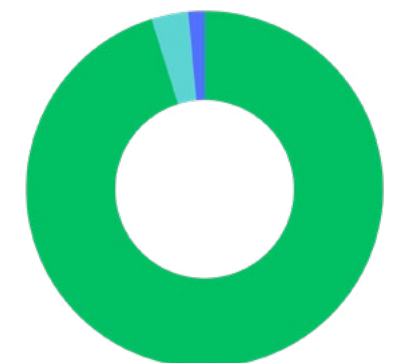


REVENUES

Grants and Contracts.....	\$65,100
Private Donations.....	\$3,285
Corporate Support.....	\$1,000
Total.....	\$68,385

EXPENSES

Program Services.....	\$33,690
Administration.....	\$949
Total.....	\$34,639



Some funding received in 2025 supports work continuing into 2026.



GROWING REACH AND SUPPORT: MAKING RIBBIT! HAPPEN

2025
IN NUMBERS:

4 QUARTERLY ISSUES
= YEAR-ROUND CONNECTION
TO LOCAL NATURE.

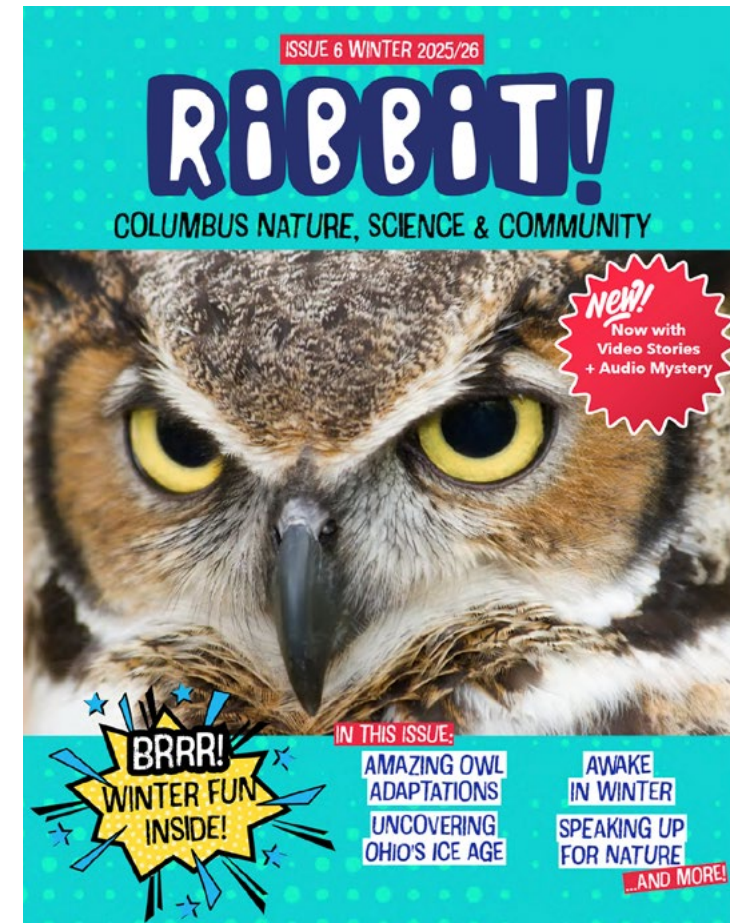
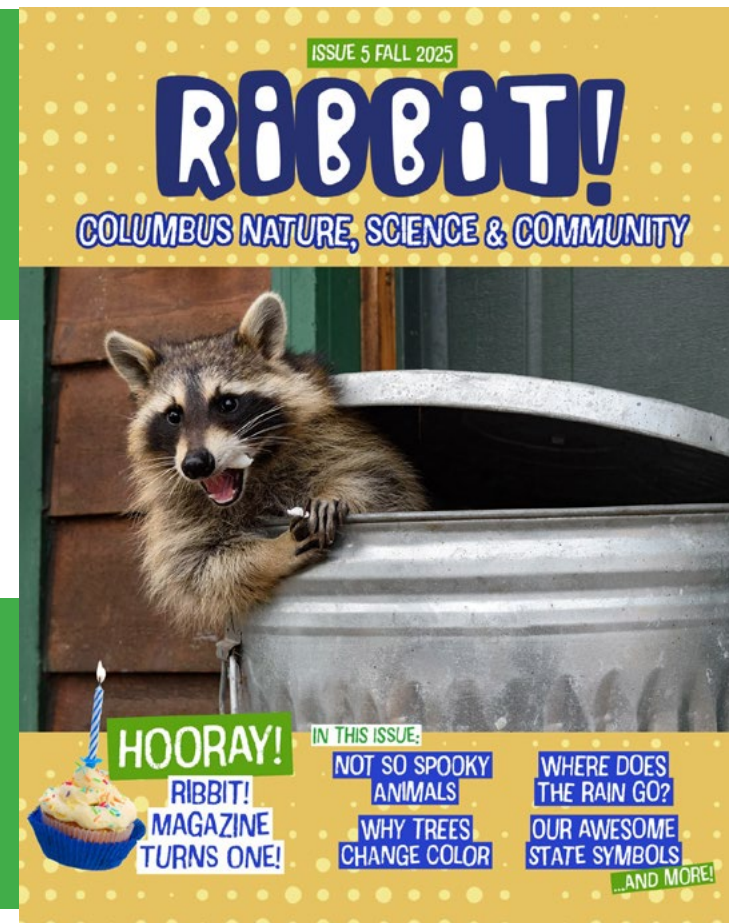
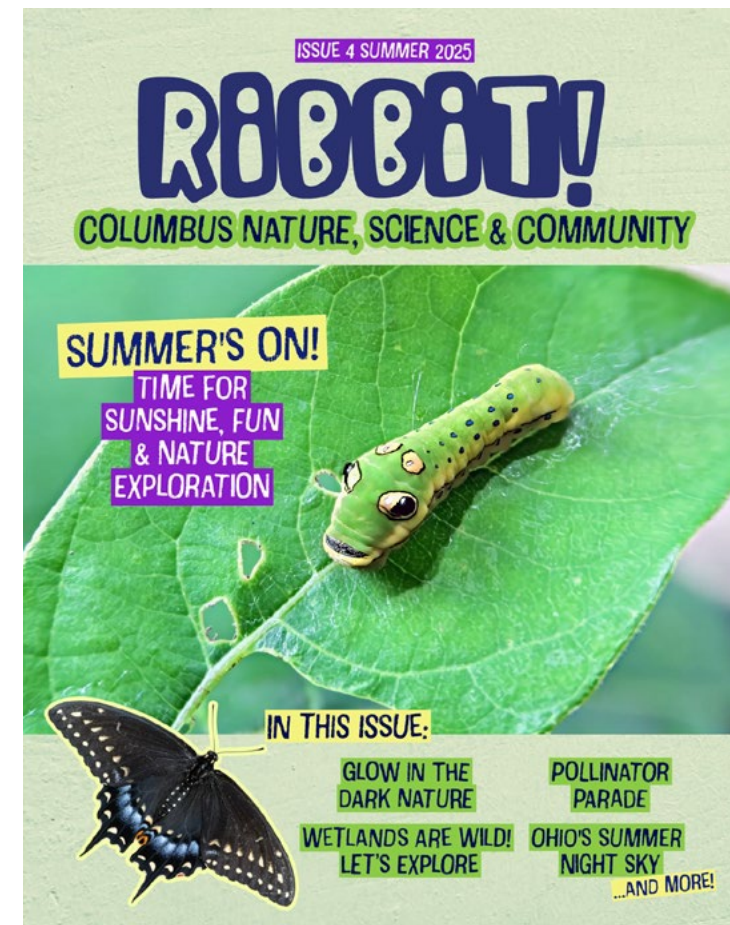
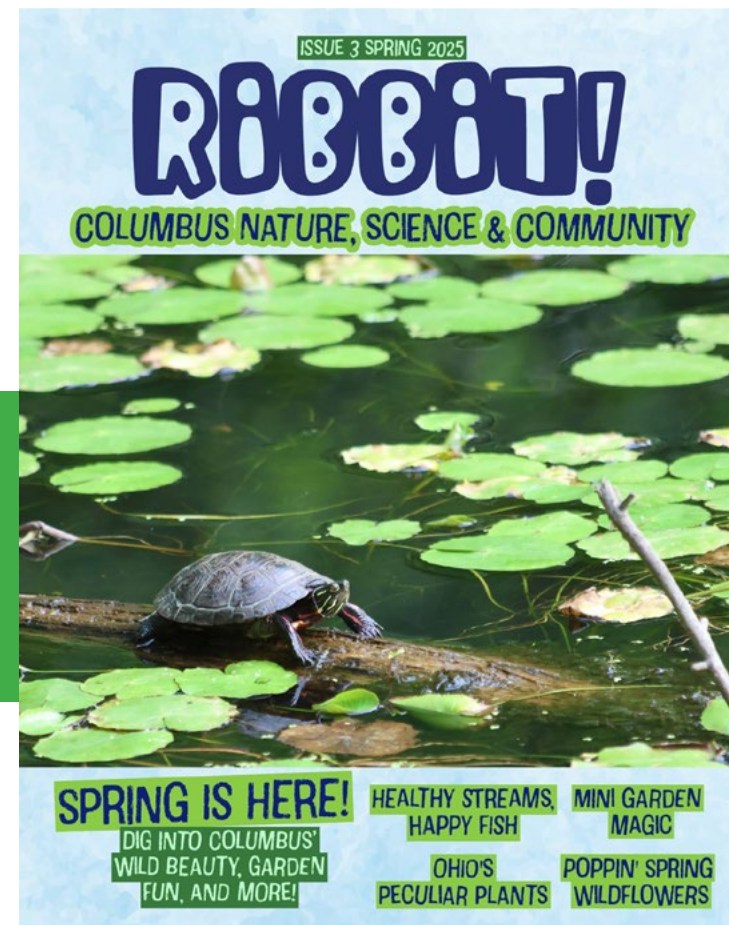
22,000 magazines printed.

Ribbit! is distributed to **70+** schools, plus **25+** libraries, **25+** community and recreation centers, Metro Parks nature centers, and community partners.

FREE
FOR EVERY CHILD.

660,000 minutes of reading, helping children explore nature while building STEM knowledge and literacy skills.

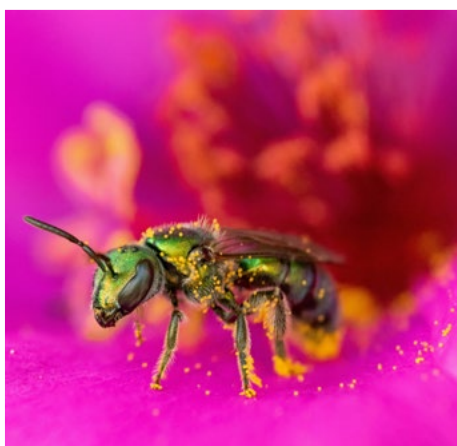
OVER 120 PAGES OF ORIGINAL,
KID-FRIENDLY CONTENT
PUBLISHED EACH YEAR.



**SPRING
ISSUE
HIGHLIGHTS**



TOPICS COVERED:
Spring wildflowers
Water quality and pollution
Common local insects
Unusual Ohio plants
Local government
Stormwater runoff
Growing food in small spaces
...and more



Content Partners:

Franklin Park Conservatory

Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks

Ohio Energy Project (OEP)

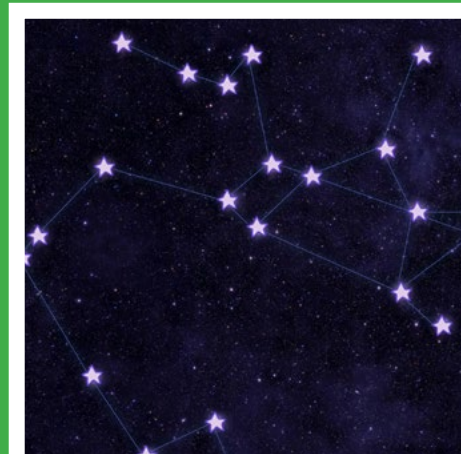
SWACO (Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio)

Museum of Biological Diversity, OSU

Joey Smith, OSU

Local Matters

**SUMMER
ISSUE
HIGHLIGHTS**



TOPICS COVERED:
Native plants & pollinators
Wetland ecosystems
Glow in the dark nature
Ohio's summer sky
Solar energy and light
Litter & environmental impact
Composting
...and more

Content Partners:

Franklin Park Conservatory

Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks

MAD Scientist Associates LLC

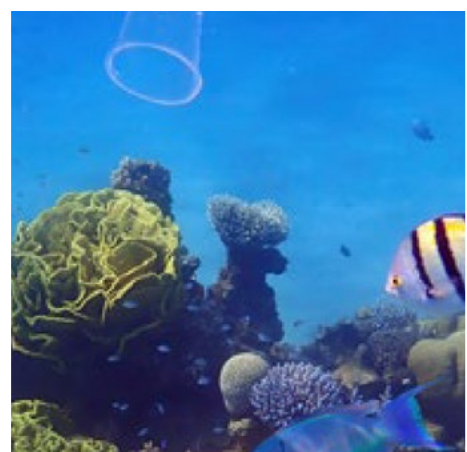
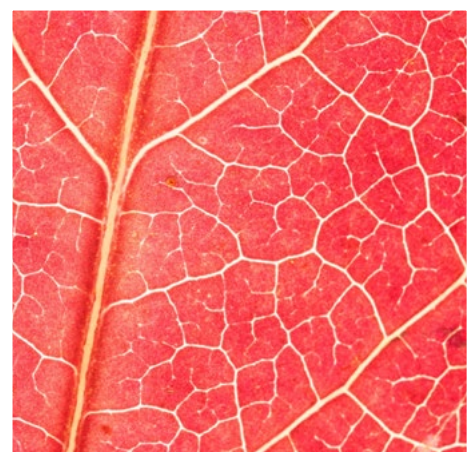
STEM Impact Collaborative, OSU

Ohio Division of Wildlife

SWACO (Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio)



FALL ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS



TOPICS COVERED:
Why trees change color
Not so spooky animals
Ohio's state symbols
Urban water systems
Urban agriculture
Waste reduction
Wildlife rehabilitation
...and more



Content Partners:

Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks

Brett Allerding Curfman

Keep Columbus Beautiful

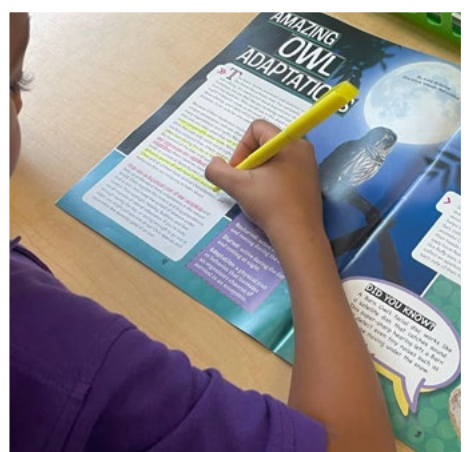
Growing and Growth Collective

Ohio Wildlife Center

SWACO (Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio)



WINTER ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS



TOPICS COVERED:
Owl adaptation
Ohio's ice age geology
Seasonal animal behavior
Human-wildlife interaction
Nature observation
Recycling and reuse
Environmental advocacy
...and more



Content Partners:

Ohio Environmental Council

Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks

Battelle Center for Science, Engineering and Public Policy, OSU

Jared the Nature Guy

SWACO

ODNR, Division of Geological Survey

INSIGHTS FROM OUR CLASSROOM REQUESTS

TEACHER QUOTES



“ Most of my kids don't get out to see much in the environment first hand. I would love this to provide further learning and excitement and help them build that connection. ”

“ We have students with different capabilities and diverse strengths and challenges... we look forward to sharing the magazine with our learning community and using it in our science exploration. ”

“ I love this magazine. I will use it in small groups and independent reading time. The kids love it because it is something different than a book and it really keeps them interested. ”



“ Students will explore the articles during independent work, use them as inspiration for STEM projects, and connect the content to real-world problem solving in our makerspace. ”

“ I will use Ribbit! as an educational resource in my classroom to help my students stay excited and engaged with learning. I will be teaching STEM, gardening and nutrition classes, and this will be a great way to keep them connected to what we are learning. ”



“ We will learn about local animals, vegetation and more while hitting both reading and writing standards in second grade. This will help students connect what they are learning to the world around them. ”



“ I am a Resource Room Intervention Specialist... and am so excited to use this magazine to help my students, the lowest readers in each grade, engage with and explore how to connect with the natural world outside the classroom. ”

“ I plan to use Ribbit! as an engaging cross-curricular resource. Students will use what they learn to read, write and illustrate nature, and connect that learning to their neighborhoods ”



LAUNCH OF MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

RIBBIT! IN ACTION

With the winter issue, Ribbit! in Action expanded the magazine into video and audio, offering new ways for children to explore nature beyond the printed page.

Filming on location with partners and educators highlighted real people and places in Columbus that support environmental learning.

Audio stories introduced a new format that supports listening, imagination and access for different types of learners.

The media library extends the magazine with video and audio that build on each issue.

Ribbit! in Action established a new direction for the magazine, with multimedia content that can continue to grow alongside future issues.

Thank you!

BATTELLE

STRONGER CONNECTION TO LOCAL EXPERTS AND PLACES



MEDIA LIBRARY: BEYOND THE PAGES



FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE GROWTH





TOGETHER FOR NATURE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED



FOR HELPING US BRING RIBBIT! TO CHILDREN ACROSS THE CITY

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:



JOINING
OUR
BOARD



VOLUNTEERING
WITH US

SERVING
AS AN
ADVISOR



INDIVIDUAL
DONATION



TEAM UP!

PARTNERING
WITH US



CORPORATE
SUPPORT



RIBBIT! MAGAZINE IS FUNDED IN PART BY THE OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FUND.

To every individual donor, thank you for helping us put nature, science and curiosity into children's hands.



Naturewise Columbus

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