



# Branching Out

## Public Meeting a Success for the Kenton County Forest Quality Assessment Project!

By Jenny Gulick, Secretary—NKY Urban and Community Forestry Council

On March 14<sup>th</sup>, a successful public meeting was held at Durr Annex to discuss the results of the Kenton County Forest Quality Assessment (FQA) project and to get feedback and input for the next phases of the on-going project.

The roundtable lunch meeting was well attended by 23 people representing Covington, Edgewood, Erlanger, Kenton County Parks, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission, Highland Cemetery, Kenton County Conservation District, Banklick Watershed Council, URS, Human Nature, and the general public. The Council was also pleased to have four Kentucky Division of Forestry staff members present as well. The attendance shows that the Council's activities in Kenton County are impor-

tant at both the local and state levels.

Discussion and ideas for the next steps included: 1. The need to market to and educate the general public about value of trees and forests—particularly homebuyers and voters; 2. The need to educate individual cities about the value of trees and forests, especially mayors, council and staff; 3. The need to define and identify “critical areas” within each city and focus on specific projects/issues per city; 4. Show developers the economic value in “building green”; 4. Study further forest effects on stormwater and impervious surfaces; 5. Partner with allied groups to publicize the results of the study; and 6. Focus further study on the remaining large and medium crown trees.

The first phase of the Kenton County FQA revealed that 41% of the county, or 43,340 acres, has forest cover. And of that coverage, 62% is classified as small crown size, 34% is medium crown size, and 4% is large crown size.

Davey Resource Group performed the project for the Council with funding and other support from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission, and the Kenton County Conservation district.

The complete report, with forest canopy details and statistics by community and watershed, can be found on the Kenton County Extension website at [www.ca.uky.edu/Kenton](http://www.ca.uky.edu/Kenton).

*Kris's Corner focuses on recommended and often overlooked high quality urban tree species.*

## Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*)



Red Buckeye is an often overlooked small tree native to the Tri State region. In the home landscape Red Buckeye is useful as a focal tree in the shrub border, a patio tree, or unusual small street tree.

This tree is one of the first native species to respond to warmer weather, and frequently produces foliage before most other native trees in the area. Flower panicles emerge in concert with the leaves usually by mid to late April in our area, and are extremely showy red to orange red. Panicles are typically 4-10" long and can last several weeks depending on the weather. Flowers are attractive to ruby-throated hummingbirds and bloom at about the same time that the hummingbirds return to the area in spring migration. Following the spectacular spring

flora display Red Buckeye produces a handsome, dense crown of palmately compound deep green lustrous foliage. Trees growing in shady locations are often much more open in habit, but flower well even in dense shade.

Red Buckeye grows well in average, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. However, best growth occurs in moist, fertile soils. The main drawback of this tree is its tendency to drop its leaves early when stressed by dry conditions in late summer. Foliage tends to scorch and generally depreciate in dry conditions. To avoid this problem the tree can be sited in part sun conditions, irrigated in dry periods, or grown in a naturally moist location. Fall foliage color is rather negligible and not one of the plant's highlights.

Red Buckeye fruit are smooth, light brown, globular (1-2" diameter) seed capsules encasing 1-3 shiny seeds known as "buckeyes" that ripen in the fall. Seeds are poisonous and are avoided by most wildlife. Native Americans threw powdered seeds and crushed branches of this tree into pools of water to stupefy fish. The fish rose to the surface and were easily caught.

Red Buckeye can be grown from seed and may flower as early as the second or third year as a seedling. Pioneers made home remedies from the bark and used the gummy roots as a soap substitute.

Specimens of Red Buckeye can be viewed in Northern Kentucky at Boone County Arboretum. This tree is hardy in our zone (USDA Zone 6A) and throughout zones 4-8, and is limitedly available in this area.

### Local Sources:

Ammon Wholesale Nursery  
(Burlington, KY)  
Marvin's Organic Gardens  
(Lebanon, OH)  
Earthscapes, Inc. (Loveland, OH)



*Red Buckeye - Aesculus pavia*

# Upcoming Classes

By Mike Klahr, Boone County Extension Agent for Horticulture, (859)586-6101

Kentucky Landscape Architect Credits have been awarded for the following classes. Those with 3 stars (\*\*\*) have also been approved for International Society of Arboriculture C.E.U.'s for Certified Arborist Credits

## \*\*\* April 12, 2005

*"Landscape Tree & Shrub Identification & Proper Pruning Techniques"* - 9:00–11:00 a.m. (no break). Outdoor pruning & I.D. session at the Boone County Arboretum at Central Park (Union, KY) taught by Mike Klahr, Boone County Extension Agent for Horticulture, and Kris Stone, Arboretum Director. Discussion will include selecting the right plant for the site, proper planting, pruning, mulching, watering and follow-up care.

## \*\*\* July 26, 2005

*"Landscape Tree & Shrub Identification"* - 9:00–11:00 a.m. (no break). An outdoor session observing and discussing approximately 100 landscape tree and shrub varieties, their selection, planting, care and maintenance; plus, choosing the proper plant for the

site. Taught by Mike Klahr, Boone County Extension Agent for Horticulture, and Kris Stone, Arboretum Director. Location: Boone County Arboretum at Central Park.

## September 13, 2005

*"Landscape Plantings to Attract Songbirds & Butterflies"* 7:00–9:00 p.m. (no break). Indoor session taught by Mike Klahr, Boone County Extension Agent for Horticulture, featuring the identification, landscape use, and care of a wide variety of trees, shrubs and perennial flowers that may be utilized to attract songbirds and butterflies to the home or commercial landscape.



## \*\*\* September 21, 2005

*"Native Trees & Shrubs for Landscape Use"* 9:00–11:00 a.m. (no break), taught by Mike Klahr, Boone County Extension Agent for Horticulture. Indoor session, slides and PowerPoint, featuring the identification, care and use of native trees, shrubs and flowers in landscape plantings, plus choosing the proper plant for the site. Location: Boone County Extension Office

## \*\*\* October 13, 2005

*"Fall Color Tree & Shrub I.D. Walk at the Arboretum"* 9:00–11:00 a.m. (no break), taught by Mike Klahr, Boone County Extension Agent for Horticulture, and Kris Stone, Arboretum Director. Outdoor session will stress the identification, ornamental features and proper care of approximately 100 species of trees and shrubs for landscape use.

Information about the International Society of Arboriculture can be found at [www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com)

**NORTHERN KENTUCKY URBAN &  
COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL**

c/o Boone County Extension Service  
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Phone: 859-572-2600

*Creating an awareness about the value of urban  
forestry in Northern Kentucky Communities.*

**We're on the web!**  
**[www.nkyurbanforestry.org](http://www.nkyurbanforestry.org)**

## Congratulations...

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To the following recipients  
of the NKY Urban and Com-  
munity Forestry Council's  
2005 Trees In Our Commu-  
nities Grant:

Bellevue—\$1500 for a city-  
wide Tree Planting Plan

Covington—\$1000 for a  
Landmark Tree project

Florence—\$1750 for a Tree  
Inventory

Fort Thomas—\$2500 for  
an Urban Forest Ecological  
Management and Enhance-  
ment Project

Howell Elementary in Els-  
mere—\$750 for a Students  
Working Together project

Redwood School and Re-  
habilitation Center in Ft.  
Mitchell—\$2500 for an Ur-  
ban Forest for Children and  
Adults with Disabilities

The grants must be com-  
pleted by November 1,  
2005. Council members  
and U.K. County Extension  
Agents are available for as-  
sistance.

The NKY Urban and Commu-  
nity Forestry Council hopes  
to provide this grant pro-  
gram again in 2006. Infor-  
mation is available at  
[www.nkyurbanforestry.org](http://www.nkyurbanforestry.org)