

Conservancy Volunteer Featured on The Discovery Channel's "Dirty Jobs"

Perrysburg, OH
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Black Swamp Conservancy's Lake Erie Islands Chapter (LEIC) has a celebrity in its midst. It's Kristin Stanford, an LEIC volunteer who is also known as the Island Snake Lady.



Kristin is a doctoral student in biology at Northern Illinois University who has studied the Lake Erie Water Snake since 2000. The snake is listed as an Ohio endangered species and is considered threatened by the U.S. government. It lives exclusively on the Lake Erie islands.

Kristin has recently been featured on the Discovery Channel's "Dirty Jobs" program. Her next appearances on "Dirty Jobs" will be at 8:00 p.m. on January 22nd and at 12:00 a.m. on January 23rd. "Dirty Jobs" is the highest-rated show on the Discovery Channel.

Kristin is the Lake Erie Water Snake outreach and research coordinator at Ohio State University's Stone Laboratory on Gibraltar Island in Lake Erie, near Put-in-Bay. She can be seen on "Dirty Jobs" catching the snakes and studying them at the laboratory. One example will convince you why her work is considered a dirty job: to determine what is in the snakes' diet, Kristin makes them throw up so she can analyze their stomach contents.

As an LEIC volunteer, Kristin is also featured at the chapter's popular Nature Camp for children ages 4 and older that is held every summer on the islands. Of course, Kristin teaches the kids about snakes.

Black Swamp Conservancy (BSC) is a regional land trust based in Perrysburg, OH, near Toledo. Founded in 1993, BSC's mission is to encourage conservation and protection of natural areas and farmland in northwest Ohio for the benefit of current and future generations.

LEIC is a BSC chapter that focuses entirely on conservation of important natural areas on the islands in the western basin of Lake Erie. To date, LEIC—which is run entirely by volunteers like Kristin Stanford—has been successful in permanently protecting land on South Bass Island, where Put-in-Bay is located, and Middle Bass Island.

Petersen Woods and two other LEIC parcels are on Middle Bass Island. LEIC's Ladd Carr Wildlife Woods is located on South Bass Island. LEIC was recently awarded a Clean Ohio grant of \$168,337 by the state, to protect additional land on South Bass Island.

The Clean Ohio Fund is a \$400 million program to preserve green space and farmland, improve outdoor recreation, and revitalize blighted neighborhoods by cleaning up and redeveloping polluted properties. The fund includes the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program, which helps to fund preservation

of open spaces, sensitive ecological areas, and stream corridors, such as Petersen Woods and Ladd-Carr Wildlife Woods.

For more information about LEIC, please visit www.blackswamp.org/LEIC.html or contact the chapter at leic_bsc@cros.net.

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