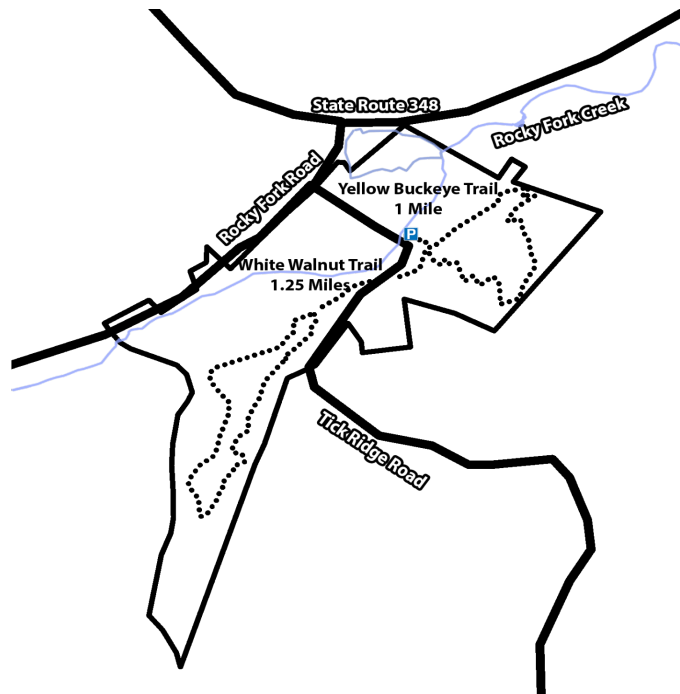




**VISITING & HIKING**  
**Gladys Riley Golden Star Lily Preserve**  
**Current Size: 186 acres**

The Arc of Appalachia's operations are 100% supported by private donations. If you love what we do, [please support us](#), so that our wildlands preservation work and trail stewardship can continue.



Dogs are not permitted at Gladys Riley. Please see [Hiking Arc Preserves](#) for dog-friendly trails.

**Hiking Trails:** The preserve features two trails totaling 3.5 miles in length. The **White Walnut Trail** is a **1.25-mile loop** that leads you through the rich floodplain of the Rocky Fork. This trail is aglow with blooming wildflowers in spring, beginning with the harbinger of spring and golden star lilies in late March, and peaking with the large-flowered trilliums in the second and third weeks of April. The **Yellow Buckeye Trail** is a 1-mile **loop** trail that winds to the top of the ridge and back through an oak-hickory hillside forest with many splendid old trees. The trails are designed to be hiked single file and are well-signed. The soils of the region are extremely rocky, and the base of most of the trails, especially in the lower elevation, is uneven cobble-sized rocks. Good balance and strong ankles are advised.

**Directions: Tick Ridge-Koenig Hill Road, Otway, OH 45657**

**From the Appalachian Highway, Rt. 32, just east of Peebles, turn south on SR 73 12.2 miles through Rarden to the little town of Otway, Ohio. In the middle of Otway, turn right or south on SR 348 for 1.1 miles. Turn left on Rocky Fork Road for just .2 miles, and then turn left on Tick Ridge-Koenig Road for another .2 miles. Just after you cross over the Rocky Fork Bridge, the gravel trailhead parking lot will be on your left. It is signed. Please note that Tick**

Ridge-Koenig Road is semi-circular and has two entrances on Rocky Fork Road. Coming out of Otway, be sure to make the first turn.

**You are Entering a Highly Protected Nature Preserve.** Regulations exist to protect natural communities from the impact of public visitors. Please follow them to leave Gladys Riley as beautiful as you found it. Remain on trails at all times, walking in single file to protect bulbs of native wildflowers bordering the trail. Do not disturb, pick or collect flowers, plants, rocks, or wildlife. Hunting, caving, fishing, trail biking, rock climbing, wading, campfires, and swimming are prohibited.

**Interpretive Kiosk:** An interpretive kiosk is situated at the trailhead. We encourage you to take a picture of the trail map with your phone before heading out on the trails.

**Gladys Riley hiking trails are open from sunrise to sunset.** Please note parking lots are not winter-maintained and the trails are not safe to hike during periods of heavy rain, ice, and snow. Trails are closed during our annual Deer Management Hunts which take place on 1) the Monday through Sunday following Thanksgiving, and 2) the Saturday and Sunday before Christmas.

**The First Preserve Anywhere for the Golden Stars, a State-Endangered Wildflower.** Gladys Riley is the first preserve specifically acquired to protect golden star lilies, (*Erythronium rostratum*). An early spring wildflower, the golden star lily faces nearly upward and bears yellow anthers instead of chocolate brown like its more familiar cousin, the common trout lily. The best time to see it in bloom is the last week of March to the first week of April. The golden star lily has a very spotty distribution in only a few eastern central states west of the Appalachians and is rare throughout its range. It grows in significant numbers *in just one place in Ohio* - on the lower run of the Rocky Fork tributary of the Scioto Brush Creek Watershed – exactly where the preserve is located. Wildflowers of other species are very rich at the site, including several that are rare. The earliest begin blooming in March, but the show continues right on through mid- to late-April.

**Stately Old Forests.** Gladys Riley's hillside forest supports unusually old trees, with many fine specimens that have impressive girths, especially considering the slow growth rate on the thin soils that support them. Common species include white, black, and chestnut oaks; pignut, bitternut, and shagbark hickories, black birch, and sweetgum. Even the rare butternut or white walnut finds refuge along the Rocky Fork Creek that bisects the preserve. A signature tree of Gladys Riley is the yellow buckeye tree, the buckeye of the southern Appalachian Mountains, foothills, floodplains, and coves. Unlike the Ohio buckeye, the yellow is a true canopy tree. Many large and stately yellow buckeyes can be seen towering above you along the White Walnut Trail.

**Ferns and mosses proliferate** in the sheltered coves at the base of the preserve's steep-sided hills. One of the more interesting is Goldie's fern, (*Dryopteris goldiean*), a large wood fern that thrives in high-moisture sites supported by cool seeps. By mid-summer in the preserve, Goldie's fern can reach hip-high.

**Preserve History.** Gladys Riley, the preserve's namesake, was a well-loved school teacher in the local community of Otway until she retired in 1972. Gladys was an avid life-long lover of the outdoors. Having taught for many years in the first grade, she inspired many a schoolchild to follow a career or a vocation in natural resources. Her son sold the property to the Arc in 2005, honoring his mother and providing a more secure future for the golden star lily nationally significant botanical features and beautiful woods.

In 2015, the Gladys Riley Golden Star Lily Preserve was expanded through the acquisition of an adjacent 118 acres purchased from a local family whose Ralstin, Hazelbaker, and Ivers ancestors were among the earliest settlers in the region. The family shared a long-time interest in nature, the environment, and education. Currently, the Arc of Appalachia is pursuing a third 40-acre addition which would protect Rocky Fork's confluence with Scioto Brush Creek downstream from the current preserve holdings.