

# Bluestem



A warm Spring welcome to all — and especially to new friends interested in learning more about Bluestem.

Bluestem Community welcomes people of all backgrounds, identities, and traditions. Our mission is dedicated to nourishing community service, ecological stewardship and spiritual practice in shared fellowship. At Bluestem in Cedar Grove, we are building a community space for individuals, groups, churches, community organizers and faith leaders to host respite offerings, community events and service opportunities. Blended within these community offerings is a conservation cemetery reclaiming burial traditions of old, where bodies and/or cremated remains are returned to the earth simply, using only biodegradable materials.

Bluestem is not yet open to the public but we expect to open this summer. Read on to learn more about our restoration work on the property, and how you can help bring this important community space to life.

In the past month alone, our mailing list has doubled. Your interest — as a new connection or long-standing friend to Bluestem — reinforces our purpose of creating a unique place in nature where reverence for life and death are woven together. It brings our small team immense joy to experience the enthusiasm and support in your messages.

*Come along with us as we share Bluestem's latest news!*

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## BUILDING BLUESTEM

During the months of March and April we continued to fundraise, plan and present on activities at Bluestem. Our work is supported by your volunteer time and donations, in restoring the land, building trails, organizing field trips, and establishing Bluestem's online systems. *Hooray, we now have a database!* Which means we can correspond with you more directly and keep better track of your interests. **Take a minute to complete [this form](#) so we can learn more about who you are and how you found Bluestem.** If you ever wish to modify your preferences, simply click on the *Manage Preferences* link at the bottom of Bluestem emails.

Tell us more about *you*

Your support of our fundraising campaign enabled us to purchase this bright, hardworking tractor! Does she need a name? Send us your suggestions.

In March, we used it for bush hogging the fields in time for the spring planting of Bluestem's native grasses and wildflowers. Working together with Garrett Wildflower Seed Farm, 26 acres of former agricultural land are being converted into biodiverse habitat. What excitement we feel watching the seedlings for Little Bluestem, Split Beard Grass, Coreopsis, Black-eyed Susans, Purple Coneflower, and Cosmos emerge. And of course, we have more equipment and materials to purchase in order to tackle the woodland restoration, build trails, and ultimately provide for burial services at Bluestem. Click here to [make a donation or learn more about donating to Bluestem.](#)

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*Friday Crew clearing the area for the Natural Sanctuary - thank you James, Jenny, Tom and Jeff.*

## HAPPENING AT BLUESTEM

A shout out to our fabulous volunteer crew who've made all the difference in shaping Bluestem in the last few months. From sawing logs to drafting communications materials, from clearing brush and farm refuse to organizing field trips and bird counts, we are so grateful for your time and dedication in growing Bluestem with us.

Our volunteer needs are currently focused in three areas:

- Trail Building
- Outreach and Communications
- Guest Speakers at our [Bluestem Conversations](#) on Zoom

**Bluestem Conversations** are every Tuesday on Zoom from 4pm-5pm. Register [here](#).

**Volunteer Work Days** are every Friday from 9am-12pm. Sign up below. You will receive a reminder ahead of each workday.

Please [contact us](#) directly with suggestions for guest speakers.

Sign up for **Friday Work Days**

Are you interested in touring Bluestem instead?

We offer **Group Walking Tours** twice a month, with morning and afternoon sessions. We can accommodate up to 20 people at each session. Sign up is first come, first served. [Check out this page for dates and to sign up](#). If you prefer a Walking Tour midweek, and can organize a group of 6-8 people, please [contact us](#) directly.





## BURIAL AT BLUESTEM

Burial is not yet available at Bluestem while we await final permitting from Orange County. Once Bluestem receives its approvals the nature preserve will be open to the public 365 days a year from dawn to dusk. The natural sanctuary will be open for community services, the trails for walking and hiking, and other areas of the property for quiet reflection.

Future burial plots will be available in two distinct areas of the restored landscape: the native grasslands and woodlands. Gravemarkers are allowed at Bluestem, but must lie flat to the ground. Burial fees will be announced via this newsletter and on the website in late spring. All burial arrangements and record-keeping will be managed by Bluestem Community.

Learn more about **Burial at Bluestem**

We hope you are able to take time outside in this beautiful Piedmont spring, and we look forward to meeting you one day soon at Bluestem.

Heidi & Jeff  
Co-founders  
Bluestem

PS. Find Bluestem at the Museum of Life and Science in Durham, Saturday 4/30, for their [Party for the Planet!](#)

Make a gift to ***Building Bluestem*** today

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