

# PARKEXPLORER

## GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT ACTIVITY GUIDE



*Photo by Jim Marquardt*

### SUMMER 2020

**4** Fishing contest brings families to Nature for a favorite pastime

**14** How to read the winners of our 25th annual writing contest

**15** Addressing the parks' handling of the pandemic

**18** Caring for our precious wetlands with three grant-funded projects this year



# UPCOMING EVENTS *Mark your calendars!*



Due to COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines, all public programs and special events are subject to change or be cancelled. Please check our website for updates before heading out.

## **Nature ARTS Festival** at Big Creek Park

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 10 AM - 5 PM**

FREE Indoor/Outdoor Juried Show with Nature-Inspired Artwork For Sale  
FREE Lolly the Trolley Ride from Chardon Arts Festival on Chardon Square  
Food Trucks, Entertainment, Demonstrations & Workshops  
Live music throughout the day followed by Nature Writing Contest event & open mic from 3 - 5 PM

## Moths & Meteors Overnight Event

**Tuesday, August 11, 9 PM - Wednesday, August 12, 6 AM**  
**at Observatory Park**

Take in the Perseid Meteor Shower, plus night flying moths attracted to our black light and mercury vapor lamps!



## Nights Out in the Parks

*A great way to spend a summer evening!*

Watch a movie under the stars at Observatory Park, or enjoy an outdoor concert at Big Creek Park or Claridon Woodlands. Details on pages 8-13.



**July 8, August 12 & September 9 • 4 - 7 PM**  
**at The West Woods' picnic shelters**

Purchase locally grown/made items the second Wednesday of each month July through September

## Geauga Park District at THE GREAT GEAUGA COUNTY FAIR

**Thursday, September 3 – Monday, September 7, 11 AM - 7 PM**  
Visit our building in the Natural Resources Area to meet the Monarch Butterfly and learn what's new in Geauga Park District! Daily live Monarch tagging at 1:30 PM as butterflies are available.



## SUMMER PROGRAMS *on pages 8-13*

- Registration is required in advance for limited enrollment programs on a first come, first served basis. Registration can be completed online or at 440-286-9516.
- Programs may be cancelled in the event of severe weather or a storm warning.
- Programs are generally free of charge; those with fees are noted. Payment of fees must be made at the time of registration with a credit/debit card.
- Registration fees are refundable up to five days prior to the event, or if the Park District cancels the program.
- If you or a member of your family has special needs, please call the Park District regarding available accessibility accommodations.



**Gaugua Gems Trekking Series Program**  
Fulfills one of the naturalist-led requirements toward your Trekking Series award



**Nature's Not To Be Missed**  
Program focused on unique encounters with Nature



Fully Wheelchair/Stroller Accessible



**Nature Scopes** - Program recommended for our fifth-grade Nature Scopes students

Upcoming Events .....	2
Feature: Biggest Fish Contest .....	4
Park Spotlight: Eldon Russell Park.....	6
Donor Recognition Feb to Apr.....	7
July Programs .....	8
August Programs.....	10
September Programs.....	12
Nature Writing Contest Winners .....	14
Camping Photo Contest .....	14
From the Executive Director .....	15
Park Locations & Amenities .....	16
Geocaching .....	17
In Nature: Wetlands for Wildlife .....	18
Fun Page .....	19

## Park Mission

The mission of Geauga Park District is to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County and to provide outdoor recreational experiences to our residents of every age, every ability and at all times of the year.

## Park Hours

Daily 6 AM - 11 PM

Big Creek Park's Donald W. Meyer Center is open weekdays 10 AM - 4:30 PM

The West Woods Nature Center is open daily 10 AM - 4:30 PM

Observatory Park is open daily till 1 AM from Memorial Day to Labor Day and till 11 PM from Labor Day to Memorial Day; its Robert McCullough Science Center and Oberle Observatory are open 2nd & 4th Fridays & Saturdays of each month 6 - 11 PM and every other Sunday of each month 1 - 4 PM

The Maple Highlands Trail is open daily dawn till dusk

Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve is open daily 6 AM - 9 PM

**For more information on your parks, programs or events**  
Phone: 440-286-9516  
Fax: 440-286-1285

[www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org)  
[info@geaugaparkdistrict.org](mailto:info@geaugaparkdistrict.org)

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
PROBATE/JUVENILE DIVISION GEAUGA COUNTY  
TIMOTHY J GRENDALL – JUDGE



Courthouse Annex, 2nd Floor  
231 Main Street, Suite 200 • Chardon, Ohio 44024  
Voice: 440-279-1830  
[www.geaugacourts.org](http://www.geaugacourts.org)

## FROM THE BENCH

Dear Geauga County Friends and Neighbors,

Congratulations to the Geauga Park District for being awarded over \$375,000 from the Stream & Wetlands Foundation! These funds will go a long way to help the Geauga Park District fulfill part of its mission to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County.

Summer is here and the beautiful Geauga County Parks continue to fulfill the other part of its mission to provide outdoor recreational experiences to our residents of every age, every ability and at all times of the year. It's time to enjoy the long-awaited warmer weather among the natural wonders of Geauga County, and the Geauga Park District Staff have done a wonderful job providing opportunities to "social distance" while enjoying Geauga's natural vistas!

Spend an afternoon birdwatching at Frohring Meadows in Bainbridge Township, where a 100 acre prairie and up to 3.5 miles of walking trails through the woodlands await your visit.

At Claridon Woodlands Park, active residents of all ages can enjoy the challenges of the Ropes Course, Climbing Wall, and BMX bicycle course, which are easily accessible from the current bike trail; and kayaking is available at Headwaters Park in Huntsburg.

You know my opinion about our amazing Geauga County Parks, but take a look at what just a few of the many Geauga County residents who visit the Parks are saying:

*"...a big thank you to our wonderful parks for just being there. The trails which are maintained by your staff are so very much appreciated."* – Joan L.

*"I just wanted to say thank you, again, for the use of Beartown for our birthday parade. The ranger that showed up actually lead the parade for my daughter and then got out after and let us take pics and hang out with Sniper! I apologize, I didn't get her name, but if you can thank her for us? It was the highlight of the parade for Julia! You guys are the best!! Thank you thank you!"* – Jamie

*"Just wanted to thank the GPD staff for the wonderful job you do protecting the parks and keeping them looking great!"* – Victoria L.

Join the fun – come and enjoy your Geauga Parks this summer. Hope to see you there!

Respectfully,

Timothy J. Grendall  
Gauga County Probate/Juvenile Court Judge

### Board of Park Commissioners



Howard Bates



Jackie Dottore



Pat Preston

### Executive Director



John Oros

### Park Board Meetings

Dates and times are subject to change. Find the current schedule on our website under About GPD, or call 440-286-9516.



FEATURING PARK FRIENDS

# How I Caught the



Geauga Park District was pleased to offer a Biggest Fish of the Week contest from April 1 through June 17 for Geauga County residents ages 17 and under. Congratulations to all the winners of a rod and reel prize! Here are stories from three of those who won the contest before this activity guide went to print.

# Biggest Fish of the Week

## Noah Liston

Age 8, of Newbury - Week 1 Winner (pictured on opposite page)  
Channel Catfish caught at Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve

Let me tell you my awesome story of how I caught a winning fish. First, I found several big worms in my yard under rocks and grass. Next, I went to the park. Then I cast my bobber and worm out. After that, I waited. Finally, I felt the fish and reeled it in as tight as I could. You have to keep the line tight to catch a fish (That's how dad taught me). I caught a 17.5" long catfish, and it was very fat. Boy, after I caught that fish, I knew I was going to win!

## Sarah Liston - Noah's Mom

We had a lovely, sunny afternoon in early April and couldn't pass up a fishing outing. I had told my sons (ages 6 and 8) about the contest, and they were excited to go fishing with some newly found worms. It was our first time visiting Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve, and I was pleased with the easy access to many fishing spots from the shore or piers around the water. Both boys caught channel catfish that day, Noah's being only an inch larger than Isaiah's! We are thankful for the well maintained variety of parks we have access to in Geauga County.

## Leah Keyser

Age 9, of Munson Twp. - Week 3 Winner (pictured at left)  
Yellow Perch caught at Bass Lake Preserve

Fishing is so fun! I love spending time with my family and enjoying the outdoors. It is a good experience. Every time we try a new Geauga park, I am determined to try the next one to catch something bigger! This contest was awesome, and I'm thankful to have won.

## Chris & Jamie Keyser - Leah's Parents

Gauga Park District has provided us with such great opportunities to spend time together. We fish, hike, bike ride and relax at the parks that are within minutes of our Munson home. Having a six person family, we could not be more thankful for all of the well kept, facilities and parks that keep us entertained year-round.



## Andrew Pegman

Age 5, of South Russell - Week 5 Winner (pictured at right)  
Black Crappie caught at Beartown Lakes Reservation

As edited by Andrew Pegman - Andrew's Father

I love fishing with my dad at Beartown Lakes. We were having a great time catching lots of sunfish. All of a sudden, my bobber completely disappeared. I felt a bite, and I started reeling in the fish. It was fighting and splashing around and pulling really hard. I thought it was a catfish or a bass, but it was a huge Black Crappie! I held it carefully for a picture, and we got it right back in the water because we wanted to release it. After we let it go, I said, "Let's catch another one!" I was so happy to win the contest and win my first rod and reel. Thank you! 🍀





## FIELD NOTES:

**A PORTION OF THE DUANE FERRIS TRAIL TAKES YOU THROUGH A CONIFER FOREST THAT'S QUITE A SIGHT TO SEE IN ANY SEASON.**

Get away with Nature's sights and sounds this summer at Eldon Russell Park in Troy Township — a 132-acre park that's a favorite for birders. Sightings here include the rare Prothonotary Warbler!

Many boaters favor Eldon Russell Park for its access to a state-designated Scenic River. This location became part of the Cuyahoga River Water Trail in 2019; the Upper Cuyahoga flows through an ancient valley filled with glacial deposits. Boaters can launch canoes, kayaks or small boats from Horwath's Landing and meander for a closer observation of wildlife. Fish to catch include Northern Pike, bass and sunfish. One could even spot a River Otter making its home along the riverbank.

Two trails to explore on this property total .87 miles. The Duane Ferris Trail, added in 2018, is a primitive trail and well worth the half mile to hike it. Scenic views with rolling terrain, and a walk through an area of nothing but majestic white pine trees, are quite enchanting, providing great incentive for some summer exercise.

This park also has a playground for kids. And keep an eye out for a sign marking the statewide Buckeye Trail. It passes along the roadway bordering the park.

## Park Spotlight

# Spend Some Time

# at Eldon Russell Park



Photo by Jim Marquardt



# People are discovering just how special their parks are. Here's what they've been saying...



Best place to be in times like these!  
-Heather on Facebook

Enjoyed Frohring Meadows yesterday. It was packed, but still able to social distance.  
-Janet on Facebook

Hiked at Frohring Meadows yesterday for the first time. We have hit 20 parks in the last few weeks. -George on Facebook

First day we finished schoolwork in under 5 hours! Our reward is a hike at Eldon Russell Park in Burton.  
-Teresa on Facebook



Love our parks! Just hope people can be considerate and keep social distancing on the trails. Keeping our parks open is especially important right now!  
-Carey on Facebook

We sure have been enjoying our parks more than ever right now. No fish caught yesterday, but any day you can get out to fish is a good day!  
-Kelly on Facebook



Big Creek Park was beautiful today!  
-Laura on Facebook



Thank You  
to All of Our  
Generous  
Donors

Donations to  
Geauga Park District  
February through  
April 2020

John & Meta Dennis Trust	Unrestricted donation	52,066.42
Cleveland Foundation	Lewis & Ruth Affelder Fund	486.50
Kenneth Gibb	Unrestricted donation	50.14
John & Geraldine Peck	Donation for summer camp	35.00
Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Fund		2,000.00
Hanes Family Foundation	Nature Scopes donation	500.00
Kiwanis Club of West Geauga	K9 donation	166.00

● Adventure/Discovery ● Arts ● Astronomy ● Kids ● Seniors

## 5 American Wildlife

Sunday, July 5, 1-2:30 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
Take a break from the summer heat with a presentation on what makes some wildlife truly American, followed by a short hike on our Discovery Trail. **Registration required.**

## 5 Full Moon: The Green Corn Moon Hike & Night Sky Viewing

Sunday, July 5, 9-11 PM  
Observatory Park  
A naturalist-led night hike to spot summer's nocturnal wildlife and learn about the moon's cycle. Then, weather permitting, observe the rising full moon using park telescopes. **Registration required.**

## 7 Toddler Time: Sensing the Summer

(Ages 1-2 w/adult) Tuesday, July 7, 10-11 AM, Beartown Lakes Reservation, North Point Shelter  
Enjoy experiencing Nature with your little one as we see, smell and touch summertime in the park. Strollers and carriers welcome! **Registration required.**

## 7 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, July 7, 1-2:30 PM  
Sunnybrook Preserve  
Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2126. Also July 21.



## 8 West Woods Wednesdays Farm Market

Wednesday, July 8, 4-7 PM  
The West Woods  
Purchase locally made/grown items the second Wednesday of each month July through September! Snacks available for purchase. Live music by Jesse Hugu. **Registration required.**

## 8 Geauga Gems Trekking Series Hike

Wednesday, July 8, 7-8:30 PM  
Claridon Woodlands  
Enjoy a summer evening hike. Participants should have the ability to hike at least 2 miles over mild terrain rain or shine, so dress accordingly and bring water. **Registration required.**



## 9 Become a Better Bluebird Landlord

Thursday, July 9, 7-8 PM  
Frothing Meadows, Katydid Lodge  
Naturalist Tami Gingrich, head of the parks' bluebird boxes for more than 25 years, will give an overview on Eastern Bluebirds and answer questions on how to become a better bluebird landlord. Whether starting out or a seasoned landlord, there is always something new to be learned! **Registration required.**

## 10 Getting to Mars

Friday, July 10, 7-9 PM  
Observatory Park  
It seems like everyone's launching a Mars probe this summer! Explore the science of getting to Mars and learn about upcoming explorations. If weather permits, this program will be followed by night-sky viewing until 11 PM. Also July 24. **Registration required.**

## 11 Nature Exploration Kayak

(Ages 12+ w/adult)  
Saturday, July 11, 10 AM-11:30 AM & 2-3:30 PM  
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve  
Enjoy a peaceful float along this beautiful wetland and experience the sights and sounds of summer. Kayaking experience recommended. Bring a snack, water and sunscreen. **Registration required beginning July 5.**

## 11 Ansel's Cave Hike: History Written in Rock

Saturday, July 11, 6-8 PM  
The West Woods  
Explore the sights and sounds of Ansel's Cave on this medium-level two-mile hike, a rare opportunity to go into this restricted area! Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Held rain or shine. **Registration required.**

## 11 Movie Night: "The Martian"

Saturday, July 11, 8-11:30 PM  
Observatory Park  
View the space spectacular "The Martian," rated PG-13. The event starts at 8 PM with Geauga County Public Library's Fun Bus. Movie shown at dusk. Bring your own blankets and lawn chairs and snacks. Movie will be cancelled in case of inclement weather.



## 12 Back Country Big Creek Hike

Sunday, July 12, 1-4 PM  
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center  
Discover the diversity of life found in Big Creek on this rugged back country adventure. This is an off-trail outdoor program. Bring a water bottle, dress for the weather, and wear shoes that can get wet and/or muddy and will provide secure footing in possible knee-high water. **Registration required.**

## 13 Nature Explorers: Streamlife Safari

(Ages 6-7)  
Monday, July 13, 9:30-11:30 AM  
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove  
Venture into a forested stream to discover wildlife such as crayfish and salamanders. Drop-off program that is outdoors, even in light rain. Dress accordingly and wear shoes or boots for wading in a rocky stream; no sandals. Completed waiver required. Drop-off at 9:30 AM and pick-up 11:30 AM. **Registration required.**



Photo by Tami Gingrich

## 14 Nature Explorers: Streamlife Safari

(Ages 8-11)  
Tuesday, July 14, 9:30-11:30 AM  
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove  
See description for July 13. Completed waiver required. **Registration required.**

## 16 Elderberries: Paddling & Peddling in the Park

Thursday, July 16, 9-11:30 AM  
Headwaters Park, Boathouse  
Join the Geauga County Department on Aging, University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center and Geauga Park District to explore the water from kayaks. Three sessions of kayaking and a guided bike ride, followed by a picnic lunch and EZ Go Cart tours. Register online, but sign-ups for each kayak session will take place at the event. BYOB (bring your own bike)! **Registration required.**

## 17 Planetary Exploration & Habitat Hike

Friday, July 17, 10-11:30 AM & 7-8:30 PM, Observatory Park  
Let's explore this unique park, which features wetland and forest habitats, and its Planetary Trail, which features fun and informative stops that explore our solar system and other space themes. Approx. 1.25 miles gravel trails. **Registration required.**





## 18 Horseback Trail Ride Connecting the Parks

Saturday, July 18, 10 AM-2 PM  
Holbrook Hollows

Bring your horse for this naturalist-led trail ride from Holbrook Hollows to Cleveland Metroparks' South Chagrin Reservation. Bring a lunch and water bottle for a mid-ride break. Expect gravel trails, boardwalk, stream & river crossings and a ride along a road. Trailer horse to Holbrook Hollows. Helmets recommended. Bring a shovel to clean up after your horse in the parking lot. **Registration required.**

## 18 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, July 18, 7-11 PM  
Observatory Park

Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to take in the wonders of the night sky using our newly restored telescope! Discover this amazing facility and all it has to offer. Cancelled if cloudy.

## 18 Nights Out in the Parks: Long Time Gone

Saturday, July 18, 7-8:30 PM  
Big Creek Park, Amphitheater

Enjoy a tribute to the music of David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Graham Nash and Neil Young. Experience vocal harmonies, signature guitar work and passion associated with this era! Held inside if inclement weather.

## 19 Evening Discovery Hike!

Sunday, July 19, 7-9 PM  
Russell Uplands Preserve

Join us for a peaceful, early-evening hike along the forested trails of this beautiful park. Parking limited; carpooling recommended. Held rain or shine, so dress for the weather. Approx. 1.5 miles over hilly terrain. No restrooms at this park. **Registration required.**

## 20 Nature Journaling: An Introduction

Monday, July 20, 9:30-Noon  
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge  
Fee: \$20 in-county/\$24 out-of-county

Attend the first meeting of this monthly series to learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. Partially outdoors. Taking photos is optional. One-time registration fee includes a journal, pen and pencil. **Registration required** at 440-279-0880.

## 21 Timbertots:

**Camp Day** (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Tuesday, July 21, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM  
Claridon Woodlands

Preschool version of big kid camp with activities, crafts and more! Outdoors, weather permitting, dress accordingly. Older or younger siblings will not be considered participants. **Registration required.** Also July 26.

## 21 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, July 21, 1-2:30 PM  
Headwaters Park, Route 322 Parking  
See description for July 7.

## 22 After-Work Hike

Wednesday, July 22, 5:30-7 PM  
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge

Join a naturalist for a medium-level evening hike at this beautiful park. **Registration required.**



## 23 Grandparents in the Park: Summer Fun!

Thursday, July 23, 10:30-11:30 AM  
Big Creek Park, Deep Woods Lodge

Grandparents and grandchildren will get outside and enjoy the fun of summertime with crafts and activities. Mostly outdoors; dress for the weather with comfortable shoes. Sandals or flip flops not recommended. **Registration required.**

## 23 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, July 23, 7-10 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center

Come to play, sing or enjoy as audience. Musicians of all levels, genres and instruments welcome. Short performances followed by sharing of songs and tunes in the round.

## 24 Getting To Mars

Friday, July 24, 7-9 PM  
Observatory Park

See the description for July 10.

## 24 Nature at Night Bike Ride

Friday, July 24, 8-10 PM  
Headwaters Park, TMHT Parking Lot

Bring your bike and take a leisurely evening bike ride to discover wildlife that presents itself as darkness descends. Bike or helmet light recommended. A 6-mile round-trip ride with stops along the way. Cancelled if heavy rain/storms. Check website for program status.

## 25 Tree ID Workshop

Saturday, July 25, 10 AM-Noon  
The West Woods, Nature Center

Learn to identify some of our common native trees using the Tree Finder booklet available at the program for \$6.35. Indoor introduction is followed by a hike to identify tree species. In collaboration with the Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio. **Registration required.**

## 25 Twilight Nature Hike

Saturday, July 25, 7-8:30 PM  
Beartown Lakes Reservation,  
North Point Shelter

Guided hike to discover the natural transition of the forest from day into night. Approx. 2 miles on gravel trail. **Registration required.**



## 25 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, July 25, 9-11 PM  
Observatory Park

Observe the wonders of the night sky using a giant research-grade telescope! If inclement weather, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead.

## 26 Timbertots:

**Camp Day** (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Sunday, July 26, 2-3 PM  
Chickagami Park, Overlook Shelter

See description for July 21. **Registration required.**

## 26 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, July 26, 2-3 PM  
Observatory Park

Join us for a planetarium presentation about what to watch for in the night sky. Building open house 1-4 PM. View the sun using our safe solar-viewing equipment, weather permitting.

## 26 Afternoon Exploration Hike

Sunday, July 26, 4:30-6 PM  
Chickagami Park, Overlook Shelter

Join a naturalist on a hike to experience this amazing park and maybe even a campfire! Approx. 1 mile. **Registration required.**



## 27 Nature Explorers:

**Bike Bingo** (Ages 6-7)

Monday, July 27, 1-3 PM  
Headwaters Park, TMHT Parking Lot  
Pedaling adventure with your bike and camera. Play wildlife bike bingo and photograph what you see. Must ride without training wheels. Helmet required. Drop-off at 1 PM and pick-up at 3 PM. Dress for the weather; no sandals/flip-flops. Bring a water bottle and sunscreen. Held even if light rain. **Registration required.** Also July 28.

## 28 Nature Explorers:

**Bike Bingo** (Ages 8-11)

Tuesday, July 28, 1-3 PM  
Headwaters Park, TMHT Parking Lot  
See description for July 27. **Registration required.**

## 29 Weave a Berry Basket

Wednesday, July 29, 6-9 PM  
Big Creek Park, Deep Woods

Fee: \$20 in-county/\$24 out-of-county  
Learn the basic art of basket weaving while making your own berry basket. Basket will measure approximately 5" x 5" x 5"H (including handle). Great for beginners. **Registration required.**

■ **Adventure/Discovery**
■ **Arts**
■ **Astronomy**
■ **Kids**
■ **Seniors**

## 1 Bass Lake Kayak

(Ages 12+ w/adult)  
Saturday, August 1, 2-3:30 PM  
Bass Lake Preserve

Spend an afternoon on these tranquil waters enjoying the wildlife and beautiful surroundings. Basic kayaking skills required; instruction not given. Held rain or shine, except thunderstorm. Wear shoes to get wet/muddy; bring drinking water. **Registration required** beginning July 17 by phone only.

## 2 Nature Arts Festival

Sunday, August 2, 10 AM-5 PM  
Big Creek Park

Don't miss this day of fine Nature-inspired arts on display and for sale by regional artists with activities for the whole family! Woodcarvings, paintings, photography, jewelry and more at various price points. Live music, make-n-take projects, entertainment, chalk art, Nature Writing Contest winner readings, and food trucks. Park at Chardon Arts Festival on Chardon Square and take a FREE 5-minute Lolly the Trolley ride to Big Creek Park. Visit the page for Special Events & Art Shows in the Activities drop-down above for schedules.

## 2 Full Moon: The Sturgeon Moon Hike & Night Sky Viewing

Sunday, August 2, 8:30-9:30 PM  
Observatory Park

A naturalist-led hike to experience Nature at night. Learn about the amazing Great Lakes sturgeon, for whom this month is named, then watch the full moon rise over Observatory Park. Hike is two miles of level trails at a gentle pace.

## 4 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, August 4, 1-2:30 PM  
Swine Creek Reservation, Lake Side  
Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2126. Also August 18.

## 5 Toddler Time: Sensing the Summer

(Ages 1-2 w/adult)  
Wednesday, August 5, 10-11 AM  
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge  
Experience Nature with your little one as we see, smell and touch summertime in the park. Strollers and carriers welcome. **Registration required.**

## 6 Invasive Plant Species Workshop

Thursday, August 6, 6:30-8 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
Land Steward Joel Firem talks about invasive species within the parks, followed by a hike to find these invasive plants. Joint program with Geauga Master Gardeners and Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio.

## 7 Meet the Gas Giant Planets

Friday, August 7, 7-8:30 PM  
Observatory Park

They're enormous, mysterious and complex! Explore our solar system's gas giants and learn about them in other solar systems. If weather permits, program will be followed by night-sky viewing until 11 PM. Also August 21.

## 7 Meet the Artist: Jim Trombo - Nature's Graces & Rural Places

Friday, August 7, 7-9 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center

View his breathtaking collection of more than 40 Nature photographs presented on canvas. Artwork on display through October 5. Refreshments served.

## 8 Dragon Hunting at The Rookery

Saturday, August 8, 1-3 PM  
The Rookery

Explore this wetland habitat and discover its dragonflies and damselflies. Learn about these amazing insects and observe their interesting behaviors. Also, catch some with provided nets! Bring binoculars, camera, sunscreen and water. Wear sturdy shoes in case we venture off-trail; no flip-flops. **Registration required.**

## 8 Movie Night: "Up"

Saturday, August 8, 8-11:30 PM  
Observatory Park

Watch Disney Pixar's "Up," rated PG, under the stars. The event starts at 8 PM with the Geauga County Public Library's Fun Bus. Movie shown at dusk. Special free ice cream treats while they last! Bring your own blankets and lawn chairs and snacks. Movie will be cancelled in case of inclement weather.

## 11 Meteors & Moths Overnight Event

Tuesday, August 11, 9 PM -  
Wednesday, August 12, 6 AM  
Observatory Park

Bring a tent and spend the night enjoying the Perseid Meteor Shower and the night-flying moths attracted by our black light and mercury vapor lamps! Best meteor viewing 1-3 AM. Naturalist on site from sunset to sunrise. Interact with moths and other nocturnal insects as you help sample and survey on-site wildlife. **CAMPING GUIDELINES: TENTS ONLY may be SET UP TUESDAY AFTER 4 PM & REMOVED BY WEDNESDAY AT 9 AM.** Thank you for understanding that no campers, trailers or generators will be permitted. **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, GRILLS OR OPEN FIRES.** Pets must be leashed at all times.



## 12 West Woods Wednesdays Farm Market

Wednesday, August 12, 4-7 PM  
The West Woods

Purchase locally made/grown items the second Wednesday of each month this summer, July through September! Snacks will be available for purchase. Live music by Rebecca Wohlever.

## 14 Geauga Gems Trekking Series Hike



Friday, August 14, 7-8:30 PM  
Sunnybrook Preserve

Enjoy a nice evening hike. Ability to hike at least 1.5 miles over hilly terrain. Rain or shine; dress accordingly and bring drinking water. **Registration required.**

## 15 Nature Break: Women's Retreat

Saturday, August 15, 8:30 AM-Noon  
Headwaters Park, Boathouse  
Fee: \$4 in-county/\$5 out-of-county

Take a break and relax in the park with activities including yoga, a Nature-related activity and kayaking. Bring a mat or beach towel for yoga. Dress in layers with comfortable clothes for being outside. **Registration required.**

## 15 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, August 15, 7-11 PM  
Observatory Park, Nassau  
Astronomical Station

Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to take in the wonders of the night sky! Stop in to discover this amazing facility and all it has to offer. Cancelled if cloudy.

## 15 Nights Out in the Parks: Hiram Rapids Stumblers

Saturday, August 15, 7-8:30 PM  
Claridon Woodlands

Enjoy high-energy folk and bluegrass music under the stars. Bring lawn chairs and/or blankets for seating in the grass. Held inside if inclement weather.

## 16 Plant Your Own Meadow!

Sunday, August 16, 1:30-2:30 PM  
Frohing Meadows, Katydid Lodge

Learn how to start your own meadow that benefits wildlife and pollinators and looks amazing, too. Second in a series featuring meadows and prairies in Geauga parks. Indoor presentation followed by an outdoor walk (separate registration). **Registration required.**

## 16 Meadow Meander

Sunday, August 16, 2:30-4 PM  
Frohing Meadows, Katydid Lodge

This outdoor walk follows "Plant Your Own Meadow" (separate registration). View the amazing display of meadow and prairie plants established and glimpse some of the wildlife that benefit, including pollinators. **Registration required.**



## 17 Nature Journaling: Aquatic Invertebrates

Monday, August 17,  
9:30 AM-Noon, The West Woods,  
Fee: \$20 in-county/\$24 out-of-county  
*Learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. This month's focus is aquatic invertebrates. Entire program is outside. Taking photos is optional. A one-time registration fee for the monthly series includes a journal, pen and pencil. **Registration required** at 440-279-0880.*

## 18 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, August 18, 1-2:30 PM  
The West Woods, Affelder House  
*See description for August 4.*

## 20 Elderberries: A Day at Camp!

Thursday, August 20, 9 AM-Noon  
Chickagami Park  
*Reconnect with your childhood summers with a day at Camp Chickagami! Camp games, activities, and snacks, plus EZ Go Cart rides. In collaboration with Geauga County Dept. on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.***

## 21 Homeschool Days: Family Learning Fair!

Friday, August 21, 1:30-3:30 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
*Drop in during program hours for fun activities and information from Geauga County Public & Burton Libraries, Geauga Soil & Water Conservation District, Fairmount Center for the Arts, and others offering opportunities for homeschool students. Partially outdoors; dress for the weather. Allow an hour or more to participate. Adult must attend with student.*

## 21 Meet the Gas Giant Planets

Friday, August 21, 7-8:30 PM  
Observatory Park  
*See description for August 7.*

## 22 Early Morning Hike

Saturday, August 22, 7-9 AM   
Veterans Legacy Woods  
*Beat the heat by getting started early. We'll talk about seasonal happenings along the way. **Registration required.***

## 22 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, August 22, 9-11 PM  
Observatory Park, Nassau  
Astronomical Station  
*Observe the wonders of the night sky using this facility's giant research-grade telescope! If weather prevents sky viewing, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead.*



## 23 South Newbury Union Chapel History

Sunday, August 23, 1-2 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
*Discover important historic events and social reform movements launched from within these walls and meet famous people who spoke there! Resting amidst 16.5 acres owned and maintained by Geauga Park District, South Newbury Union Chapel is owned by no one but managed by three trustees, and has many important stories to share.*

## 23 Timbertots: Leave it to Beavers! (Ages 3-5 w/Adult)

Sunday, August 23, 2-3 PM  
The West Woods  
*Join Nora the Explorer on an adventure to discover Nature's engineers through fun activities and a walk. Held outdoors, weather permitting; dress accordingly. **Registration required.** Also August 24.*

## 23 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, August 23, 2-3 PM  
Observatory Park  
*A planetarium presentation about what to watch for in the night sky. Building open house 1-4 PM. View the sun using our safe solar-viewing equipment, weather permitting.*

## 23 Exploring Affelder

Sunday, August 23, 4-5:30 PM   
The West Woods, Affelder House  
*Take a guided hike to discover this hidden gem with unique natural features. Approx. 2 miles on a gravel trail. **Registration required.***

## 24 Timbertots: Leave it to Beavers! (Ages 3-5 w/Adult)

Monday, August 24, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge  
*See description for August 23. **Registration required.***

## 27 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, August 27, 7-10 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
*Come to play, sing or simply enjoy as audience. Musicians of all levels, genres and instruments are welcome. Short performances followed by sharing of songs and tunes in the round.*

## 28 The Nature of the Orchard Hike



Friday, August 28, 9-10:30 AM  
Orchard Hills Park, Parking Area  
*As we walk the trails at Orchard Hills Park, learn about the plants and animals that utilize this special property. **Registration required.***

## 29 Scout Day: Bear Cub Scouts - Fur, Feathers & Ferns

Saturday, August 29, 9-11 AM  
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge  
*We'll work on requirements 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 to fully complete this adventure. To maximize attendance there is a limit of four registrations per person; only register participating scouts. **Registration required** at 440-279-0880.*

## 29 Trail Horse Nature Challenge

Saturday, August 29, 10 AM-3 PM  
The West Woods  
*Challenge yourself and your horse on a 1-2 hour course with natural trail obstacles and Nature questions along the trails. Awards given in youth and adult divisions. Helmets recommended. Trailer your horse to the shelter parking lot. Departure times will be assigned in order of registration. Ride out individually or in pairs at a leisurely pace. Once finished, you may ride other trails on your own. Expect hills, gravel, mud, streams, bicycles, hikers and other challenges. Must clean up after your horse in the parking lot. **Registration required.***

## 29 Scout Day: Brownie Girl Scouts - Eco Friend Badge

Saturday, August 29, 1:30-4 PM  
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge  
*Learn more about outdoor spaces and how to teach others to treat them with kindness! Complete all requirements to earn this badge. To maximize attendance, there is a limit of 4 registrations per person; only register participating scouts. **Registration required** at 440-279-0880.*

## 29 Nights Out in the Parks: The Pop Tarts in Concert

Saturday, August 29, 7-8:30 PM  
Big Creek Park, Amphitheater  
*Head back to the '60s for groovy top hit favorites from the best of girl groups of this decade! Held inside if inclement weather. Refreshments served.*

## 30 Hidden Gems Hike: Swine Creek Valley



Sunday, August 30, 1-2:30 PM  
Swine Creek Reservation, Valley  
*Discover this amazing, often-overlooked area of this park as we hike its beautiful trails. Must have the ability to hike 1.5 miles over hilly terrain with stream crossing. Held rain or shine. Wear footwear that can get wet and muddy. **Registration required.***

 **Adventure/Discovery**  **Arts**  **Astronomy**  **Kids**  **Seniors**


## 1 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, September 1, 1-2:30 PM  
Holbrook Hollows

Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2126. Also September 15 & 29.

## 2 Full Moon: The Pawpaw Moon Hike & Night Sky Viewing


Wednesday, September 2,  
8-9:30 PM, Observatory Park

This full moon is named after America's favorite wild fruit, the pawpaw. Learn about natural treasures on a night hike, then watch the full moon rise using park telescopes. Hike is on level trails at a gentle pace for less than two miles. **Registration required.** 

## 3-7 The Great Geauga County Fair

Thursday-Monday, September 3-7,  
11 AM-7 PM

Gauga County Fairgrounds,  
Natural Resources Area

Visit our building to meet the Monarch Butterfly and see what's new with Geauga Park District! Daily live Monarch taggings at 1:30 PM if butterflies are available. 

## 5 LaDue Kayak Float

(Ages 12+ w/adult)

Saturday, September 5, 1-3 PM  
LaDue Reservoir, Rt. 44 Parking Lot  
South of US 422


Paddle LaDue Reservoir in hopes of spotting some amazing birds. Bring your own boat and binoculars or reserve ours. Must have kayaking skills. **Registration required** beginning August 28.

## 9 Timbertots: Seed Need

(Ages 3-5 w/adult)


Wednesday, September 9,  
10-11 AM & 1-2 PM

Orchard Hills Park, Lodge

Explore seeds and how plants and animals need them with fun games and activities. Program outdoors; dress for the weather. Older and younger aged siblings are not considered registered participants. **Registration required.** Also September 12. 

## 9 West Woods Wednesdays Farm Market


Wednesday, September 9, 4-7 PM  
The West Woods

Purchase locally made/grown items at the second Wednesday of each month this summer, July through September! Snacks available for purchase. Live music by Rebecca Wohlever. 

## 11 Chagrin River Bird Quest Birding Challenge

Friday, September 11, 4-6 PM


The West Woods, Nature Center

Calling all bird enthusiasts! Participate in a 24-hour birding marathon. Get a team together and register with Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland at [www.clevelandaudubon.org](http://www.clevelandaudubon.org). Then come to the Nature Center for team check-in and final registration. Pick up maps, checklists and T-shirts and talk strategy with teammates and naturalists. All materials and activities are free. 

## 11 Space Archaeology

Friday, September 11, 7-8:30 PM

Observatory Park


From satellites that reveal archaeological sites, to ancient structures that show how vanished people viewed the sky, space has a lot to teach us about our past. If weather permits, program will be followed by night-sky viewing until 11 PM. Also September 25. 

## 12 Timbertots: Seed Need

(Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Saturday, September 12, 10-11 AM

Orchard Hills Park, Pondsides Shelter

See description for September 9. **Registration required.** 

## 12 Goat Yoga in the Park

Saturday, September 12,

10:30 AM-Noon, Big Creek Park,

Maple Grove Shelter,

Fee: \$25 in-county/\$28 out-of-county

Join the Park District and Feels Like Home

Farm for an outdoor yoga experience featuring fun and frolicking goats! Goat Yoga is a popular animal therapy activity that can lower stress and increase well-being. Bring your sense of humor, yoga mat and a large towel. Long hair should be pulled back. Dress in clothes to exercise outdoors. Ages 8+.

**Registration required.**

## 12 End of the Summer Exploration

Saturday, September 12, 2-3:30 PM


Orchard Hills Park, Pondsides Shelter

Naturalist-led, off-trail adventure exploring seldom-visited portions in search of signs of wildlife. Rugged terrain; must be physically capable of several miles of off-trail challenges with some steep hills. **Registration required.**

## 12 Chagrin River Bird Quest Celebration

Saturday, September 12,

4-6:30 PM, The West Woods



The 24-hour Chagrin River Bird Quest ends with a celebration! Turn in bird checklists for judging, then enjoy awards and door prizes. Details at [www.clevelandaudubon.org](http://www.clevelandaudubon.org). 

## 12 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, September 12, 8-11 PM

Observatory Park, Nassau

Astronomical Station

Observe the wonders of the night sky using this facility's giant research-grade telescope! If weather prevents sky viewing, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead. Also September 26.  

## 13 Monarchs & Meadow Insects



Sunday, September 13, 12:30-4 PM

Frohning Meadows, Katydid Lodge

Net and tag Monarch butterflies and play the life-sized Monarch Migration game to learn about the difficulties of this amazing journey. Fun for all ages! Also catch a variety of critters and native pollinators that call the meadow home. Nets provided or bring your own. Sun protection, socks, hat and long pants recommended. Monarch life cycle and insect overview at 12:30 PM; netting in field 1-4 PM. Drop in at any time. No insects collected will be removed from park. Naturalist does tagging. If you net a butterfly, your name will be recorded for us to contact in the event the butterfly is recovered along its migration to Mexico. Also September 20.

## 13 Forest Hike

Sunday, September 13,

2-3:30 PM, Big Creek Park

Beechnut Trailhead

Walk through two different types of forest, along the Beechnut and Hemlock trails, and learn about the plants and animals we see. **Registration required.**

## 15 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, September 15, 1-2:30 PM

Frohning Meadows

See description for September 1. Also September 29.

## 15 Howling with Coyotes!

Tuesday, September 15, 7:30-9:30 PM

Frohning Meadows, Katydid Lodge

Learn amazing facts about coyotes and hike out to two survey locations to broadcast real coyote recordings into the night with hopes of hearing return calls! **Registration required.**

## 17 Elderberries: Astronomy Night

Thursday, September 17,

6:30-9:30 PM, Observatory Park

Seniors age 55+, join in a hot dog cookout at 6:30 PM. Astronomy fun begins at 7 PM! Enjoy a planetarium show, then peer deep into the night sky through the Oberle telescope, viewing cool celestial features, weather permitting. EZ Go Cart Tours of the Planetary Trail. Hosted with the Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.**





## 18 Campfire Songs & Stories

Friday, September 18, 7:30-9 PM  
Holbrook Hollows, Lodge  
Celebrate the beginning of autumn with a fun evening around a campfire, plus some other fun activities. **Registration required.**

## 19 Horseback Riders: Amish Buggy Training & Trail Ride

Saturday, September 19, 9:30 AM-1:30 PM, Swine Creek Reservation  
Bring your horse to experience an Amish horse and buggy in a non-threatening way courtesy of Linda Byler. Learn to safely share the trail, then join a naturalist-led trail ride. Bring a lunch and share time with other riders at Woods Edge Shelter to round out the program. Expect hills, gravel, mud, streams and Amish buggies. Helmets recommended. Must clean up after your horse in the parking lot. **Registration required.**

## 19 Scout Day: Junior Girl Scouts - Geocacher Badge

Saturday, September 19, 9:30-11:30 AM, Big Creek Park  
A morning of high-tech hide & seek as you work toward this badge. Bring your own GPS unit or use ours. To maximize attendance there is a limit of 4 registrations per person; please register only participating scouts. **Registration required** at 440-279-0880.

## 19 Ohio Open Doors: Nassau History Open House

Saturday, September 19, 1-5 PM  
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station  
Landmarks state-wide are opening their doors to seekers of Ohio history during Ohio Open Doors week. Tour the Nassau Astronomical Station and learn about its history. Then, if skies are clear, come back after sunset for night-sky viewing program.

## 19 Scout Day: Wolf Cub Scouts - Finding Your Way

Saturday, September 19, 1-3 PM  
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center  
Discover how to use a map and compass to locate objects. Go on a hike as part of this badge's elective adventure! To maximize attendance and minimize no-shows, there is a limit of 4 registrations per person; please register only participating scouts. **Registration required** at 440-279-0880.

## 19 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, September 19, 7-11 PM  
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station  
Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to take in the wonders of the night sky. Discover this amazing facility and all it has to offer. Cancelled if cloudy.

## 20 Monarchs & Meadow Insects

Sunday, September 20, 12:30-4 PM  
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge  
See description for September 13.

## 20 A Passion for Pawpaws

Sunday, September 20, 1-3 PM  
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center  
Discover why the pawpaw has been called America's forgotten fruit and how it is making a comeback. Indoor presentation followed by a hike through a pawpaw patch. **Registration required.**

## 21 Nature Journaling: An Observation of Milkweed

Monday, September 21, 9:30 AM-Noon, Orchard Hills Park  
Fee: \$20 in-county/\$24 out-of-county  
Learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. This month focuses on milkweed and the critters that use it. Partially outdoors. Taking photos is optional. A one-time registration fee for the monthly series includes a journal, pen and pencil. **Registration required** at 440-279-0880.

## 22 Fall Equinox Hike

Tuesday, September 22, 6:30-7:30 PM, Observatory Park  
Celebrate the new season with a naturalist-led hike along the Planetary Trail! Learn the science behind the equinox, then watch the sun set (exactly) in the west. Approx. 1 mile of trails over level terrain at a gentle pace. **Registration required.**

## 24 Geauga Gems Trekking Series Hike

Thursday, September 24, 6:30-8 PM  
Beartown Lakes Reservation  
Enjoy an evening hike on the trails at Beartown Lakes. Must be able to hike at least 2 miles over mild terrain rain or shine. Dress accordingly and bring water. **Registration required.**

## 24 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, September 24, 7-10 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
Come to play, sing or simply enjoy as audience. Musicians of all levels, genres and instruments are welcome. Short performances followed by sharing of songs and tunes in the round.

## 25 Space Archaeology

Friday, September 25, 7-8:30 PM  
Observatory Park  
See description for September 11.

## 26 Nature Explorers: Habitat Hide & Seek

(Ages 6-7 & 8-11)  
Saturday, September 26, 1-3 PM  
Observatory Park, Cygnus Shelter  
Venture into meadows and woodlands to discover the amazing diversity of tiny invertebrates. Drop-off program, outdoors rain or shine; dress for the weather. Completed waiver required. Separate sessions for two age groups, same date and time. **Registration required.**

## 26 Autumn Leaves Glass Painting Workshop

Saturday, September 26, 1-3:30 PM,  
The West Woods, Affelder House  
Fee: \$24 in-county/\$28 out-of-county  
Join artist Jeanne Carder Shimek from Artifacts Gift Studio to paint a wine glass with a fall tree/leaf motif. Fee includes materials and instruction. Ages 18+. No experience necessary. **Registration required.**

## 26 Spider Searching

Saturday, September 26, 3-4:30 PM, The West Woods  
Learn some basic spider biology followed by a short walk to search for these amazing creatures.

## 26 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, September 26, 8-11 PM  
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station  
See description for September 12.

## 27 NOAH Reptile Day

Sunday, September 27, 12:30-4 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
Stop by to meet a wide variety of these incredible creatures brought in by members of the Northern Ohio Association of Herpetologists (NOAH).

## 27 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, September 27, 2-3 PM  
Observatory Park  
Join us for a presentation about what to watch for in the night sky. Building open house 1-4 PM. Also view the sun using our safe solar-viewing equipment, weather permitting.

## 28 Geauga Gems Fall Hike

Monday, September 28, 10:30 AM-Noon, Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge  
Take a fall hike along Gray Fox Trail to discover what the season has to offer. **Registration required.**

## 29 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, September 29, 1-2:30 PM, Orchard Hills Park  
See description for September 1. Also September 15.

# Nature Writing Contest Winners

Congratulations to all 30 talented winners of our **25th Annual Nature Writing Contest!** You can read all their works now on our **News & Updates** page. Also, please join us in honoring them during our **Nature Arts Festival** on Sunday, August 2, at Big Creek Park, where judges will discuss their decisions and winners will read their works, followed by a casual open mic for all.

## Child Poetry

1st .....Isabelle Armstrong  
2nd .....Natalie George  
3rd .....Sienna Taylor  
HM .....Lena Wright  
HM .....Jack Penny

## Child Prose

1st .....Chloe Murphy  
2nd .....Colby Sapp  
3rd .....Audrey Ronayne  
HM .....Ophelia Silvia  
HM .....Michael Zhu

## Adolescent Poetry

1st .....Elise Tibert  
2nd .....Meghan Bhanoo  
3rd .....Maya Taylor  
HM .....Noelle Rudersdorf  
HM .....Amber Zeiler

## Adolescent Prose

1st .....Samyuktha Iyer  
2nd .....Qiwen Wu  
3rd .....Abby Gemechu  
HM .....Serena Nouraldin  
HM .....Justin Phillips

## Adult Poetry

1st .....Halle Blados  
2nd .....Christina Mihalic  
3rd .....Ben Fekete  
HM .....Sarah Marcus-Donnelly  
HM .....Laura Reed

## Adult Prose

1st .....Kevin Louise Schaner  
2nd .....Lori Vaught  
3rd .....Christie French  
HM .....Mary C. Ryan  
HM .....Andrew France



Camping is full of rewards of its own: fresh air, Nature's sights and sounds, the calming influence of a campfire, and priceless time with family — or just yourself and the Great Outdoors. Within Geauga Park District, four parks offer clean, safe and scenic primitive and lean-to camping opportunities that offer something for everyone to enjoy.

Now, Geauga Park District's **Camper of the Week Contest** will also reward one lucky camper or camping family each week with a \$50 gift card courtesy of Geauga Cares4U.

Wednesday, June 24, is the contest kick-off, and entries will be accepted weekly through the following Tuesday all summer long, concluding with the final week beginning Wednesday, September 2.

Not sure where to camp? Learn more about camping in your parks, and make your reservation, at [www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org) under Activities, then Camping. (Please note that campsites must be reserved online at least seven days prior to the reservation or by phone before 4 p.m. the day of the reservation, as walk-up/first-come-first-served camping is no longer permitted.)

To enter the contest, just send a picture of yourself and/or your family posing with your campsite to [info@geaugaparkdistrict.org](mailto:info@geaugaparkdistrict.org) with your name, age, hometown, date, and campsite location in the email body and "Camper of the Week Contest" in the email subject line. **Rules:** To qualify to win, campers must reside in Geauga County, and entry photos must have been taken at a Geauga Park District campsite. Campers may enter weekly for a chance to win, but win only once. Winners will be chosen by Geauga Park District Executive Director John Oros. Winning photos and names may also appear on our social media or publicity materials.

**Please remember be courteous to others while camping and practice safe social distancing. Good Luck!**





# Here For You

I hope this letter finds you and your family doing well. As we have all navigated the challenges associated with COVID-19, we have been happy to see Geauga Park District is a place for you to rejuvenate, relax and recreate. Our 25 parks are busy. Our 78+ miles of trail are getting a lot of use. Bicycles, walkers, hikers, runners and horseback riders are taking advantage of our diverse trails. Despite the coronavirus, our residents are a hearty bunch. We all know Geauga County is a place that can bring four seasons of weather in any given 24-hour period. Even with the rain and snow, you and your families were out and about, taking advantage of a variety of trail experiences.

Throughout this time, our staff remained accommodating and creative in keeping your parks open for business. Restrooms remained open and clean, park rangers interacted with park guests, and naturalists produced online Nature education videos for our YouTube channel. We also enjoyed hosting a youth fishing contest. Kids of all ages took advantage of this opportunity to get outside and enjoy fishing, with each

week's winner receiving a rod and reel prize. It was so great to see these young anglers excited to share a picture of their trophy fish. You can check out pages 4 & 5 to see their pictures and read some of their stories.

And now, as we move into summer camping season, we hope you will also be outside to enjoy time with your family at one of our 32 primitive campsites. By the time this hits your mailboxes, we will be announcing a summer camping photo contest; watch our website and social media for details.

In closing, it's exciting to see Ohio back to work. Many of our friends and neighbors are reopening their local businesses. One thing is clear in Geauga County: we all have a strong work ethic, sense of pride, and civic duty to our Geauga community. I hope you get out often this summer to patronize our local businesses.

At Geauga Park District, we will continue to provide some of the best parks and trails in our business. We are here for you. Enjoy your summer!

*John Oros*  
Executive Director



*Photo by Grace Rybak*

# Family Camp Days















Photo by Abby Smith

With this year's Adventure Day Camps cancelled, we've created some awesome alternative experiences to enjoy instead: **Family Camp Days!** Registration is open now for these **FREE** programs on Tuesdays & Thursdays, July 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28 & 30, when Geauga County residents entering grades 5-10 and their families can enjoy some of our most popular adventure camp activities: rocket building and launching, stream exploration, kayaking, pond dipping, fishing and insect netting in the parks. Check them out on our website today!

Photo by Sonny Williams

## Park Locations and Amenities

ICONS LISTED AT RIGHT  
IN THE ORDER THEY APPEAR

														
Bass Lake Preserve 11445 Lakeview Road, Munson, 44024 <i>NO TRAILS AVAILABLE; BOATING BY PERMIT ONLY</i>				✓	✓							✓	✓	
Beartown Lakes Reservation 18870 Quinn Road, Auburn/Bainbridge, 44023 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 2.8</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park 7940 Cedar Road, Chester, 44026 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.0</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓						
Big Creek Park 9160 Robinson Road, Chardon, 44024 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 3.8</i> <i>Facility reservations are available - call or visit website for details</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Big Creek Park - Horse Trail 12000 Woodin Road, Chardon, 44024					✓		✓	✓	✓					
Big Creek Park - Tupelo Pond 9373 Ravenna Road, Chardon, 44024 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 2.9</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve 15681 Old Rider Road, Burton/Newbury, 44021 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.7</i>	✓				✓		✓	✓						
Chickagami Park 17957 Tavern Road, Parkman, 44021 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.6</i>			✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			
Claridon Woodlands 11383 Claridon Troy Road, Claridon, 44033 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 2.2</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Eldon Russell Park 16315 Rapids Road, Troy, 44021 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.3</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Frohring Meadows 16780 Savage Road, Bainbridge, 44023 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 3.5</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓						
Headwaters Park 13365 Old State Road, Claridon/Huntsburg, 44021 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 3.3</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Holbrook Hollows 7250 Country Lane, Bainbridge, 44023 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 2.8</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
The Maple Highlands Trail (TMHT) <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 21.1</i> <i>City of Chardon: 1.2 and City of Middlefield: 0.5</i> <i>Access to trail also from Claridon Woodlands, Headwaters Park &amp; Swine Creek Reservation; horses permitted on south section only</i>	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓				
Mountain Run Station - Access to TMHT 12601 Chardon Windsor Road, Hambden, 44024 <i>MILEAGE OF LINK ACCESSING TMHT: 0.4</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓				



# ADVENTURES in Geocaching



N 41° 37.897  
W -81° 11.363

Check out this new cache at  
Whitlam Woods in Hambden Township

Expires July 1, 2021. Find details on our website under Activities.

Two trails you'll need  
beneath your feet to  
find this tiny cache you  
seek. With step  
and stair, one  
travels down a  
valley where a  
bridge is found.  
No need to climb  
back up again; just  
make sure not to bump  
your head.

ACCESSIBLE TRAILS • PAVED TRAILS • OPEN SHELTERS • ENCLOSED LODGES • RESTROOMS • PLAYGROUNDS • HIKING  
X-COUNTRY SKIING • HORSES • BICYCLES • CAMPING • FISHING • BOATING • SLED HILL

Big Creek Spur - Access to TMHT 9280 Ravenna Road, Chardon, 44024 <i>MILEAGE OF LINK ACCESSING TMHT: 0.6</i>	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓				
Observatory Park 10610 Clay Street, Montville, 44064 Nassau Astronomical Station 10350 Clay Street, Montville, 44064 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 3.62</i> <i>Facility reservations are available - call or visit website for details</i>			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓					
Orchard Hills Park 11340 Caves Road, Chester, 44026 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 3.6</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
Russell Uplands Preserve 15200 Russell Road, Russell, 44022 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 2.0</i>			✓				✓	✓				✓		
Sunnybrook Preserve 12474 Heath Road, Chester, 44026 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.7</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓						
Swine Creek Reservation 16004 Hayes Road, Middlefield, 44062 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 5.8</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
The Rookery 10110 Cedar Road, Munson, 44026 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.4</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Veterans Legacy Woods 14085 Ravenna Road, Newbury/Burton, 44065 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 4.5</i>		✓		✓			✓					✓		
The West Woods 9465 Kinsman Road, Russell, 44072 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 6.7</i> The West Woods - Affelder House 15139 Chillicothe Road, Russell, 44072 <i>Facility reservations are available - call or visit website for details</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve 11620 Ravenna Road, Munson, 44024 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.6</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓		
Whitlam Woods 12500 Pearl Road, Hambden, 44024 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.1</i>					✓		✓							
Woodin Road Park 12205 Woodin Road, Chardon, 44024 <i>NO TRAILS AVAILABLE</i>														

View the current fee schedule on our website under Reservations. All enclosed lodges, but not all open shelters, are equipped with electricity. Boating on Bass Lake requires a permit. Permitted watercraft are kayaks, canoes and electric motors; gasoline engines are permitted only in Eldon Russell Park. Learn more on our website under Activities.

# In Nature Wetlands for Wildlife

By Paul Pira, Park Biologist

Photo by Linda Gilbert



Photo by Tami Gingrich

**W**etlands and wildlife go hand-in-hand. When the first settlers came to Ohio, they encountered large areas of shallow water and lush vegetation. These areas flourished with abundant fish, waterfowl, and a wide variety of wildlife. Unfortunately, nearly 90 percent of Ohio's original wetlands have disappeared now. In fact, from the 1780s to the 1980s, Ohio's wetlands declined from about 5 million acres to about 483,000 acres. That's a tremendous loss for wildlife in Ohio. Most of Ohio's wetlands were drained and filled to make way for farms, roadways and development.

Wetlands were once viewed as disease-producing, mosquito-ridden areas with little value, but research has proven these statements simply untrue. Of all our natural resources, they are almost unrivaled in their benefits to both humans and wildlife. A few (of the many) benefits include: cleaning and filtering water from pollutants, replenishing groundwater (well-water), buffering us from the effects of flooding, and providing important nursery areas for fish, amphibians and reptiles. They are also spectacular places for birds.

Recognizing the importance of wetlands, Geauga Park District is beginning this year several exciting wetland/stream restoration projects that are grant-funded by the Ohio EPA and the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The first project is located in Chester Township at our Sunnybrook Preserve and will involve stabilizing the eroding stream and improving wetland habitat surrounding its cold-water stream.



Photo by Paul Pira



Photo by Paul Pira

The second project is in Munson Township at Bass Lake Preserve and will consist of reshaping the incoming Beaver Creek, which was made into a channelized ditch over 100 years ago. Along with reshaping Beaver Creek into a more natural meander, adjacent wetlands will also be restored to natural conditions, allowing flood waters to enter and benefit the countless wildlife that uses this important wetland/lake corridor.

Finally, the last project will take place in Hambden Township at a property called Stapel's Meadows. Here, your Park District will enhance existing wetlands/ponds by flooding more meadow habitat and installing water control structures that allow for water level management. This will create new shallow marsh and wet-meadow wetlands that wildlife love to inhabit.

Gauga Park District knows the value of wetlands to wildlife and will continue to look for more opportunities to enhance these critical areas in years to come. Stay tuned for updates about these great projects!





# To BEE or NOT to Bee!

How can you tell if a bee is really a bee? It has yellow and black stripes, which looks like a bee, but...could that bee actually be a fly, a wasp or a moth?

There are some 20,000 species each of bees and wasps — but they both belong to the order **Hymenoptera**, which also includes ants. Some very common bees you might see at home or in the parks are honeybees, bumblebees, carpenter bees and mason bees. The most common wasps are paper wasps, yellow jackets and hornets.



So how do we know if it's a bee or not a bee? Details in their bodies and behavior can tell us a lot. Let's play a clue game! If you correctly answer all the questions below, you'll spell out a word that describes a very important job for these critters. If you get some wrong, you won't form a real word, so you'll have to go back to find out which ones were wrong. Have fun!

## BEE NOT a bee

- 1 It is interested in your food
- 2 It is sitting inside a flower
- 3 It is more likely to sting you
- 4 It is coming out of a paper or mud nest
- 5 It has pollen sacs on its legs
- 6 It is hairless with long, narrow wings
- 7 It is fuzzy or hairy
- 8 It has bright yellow markings
- 9 It has a super thin waist and thin body
- 10 It dies after it stings you

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Write the letters that correspond to your answers on the lines below. If it doesn't spell a real word, go back and review your answers.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

*This is a very important job! Honey bees alone are responsible for more than 100 types of crops in the U.S. and play a very important role in our ecosystem.*

Help Honey bees by planting native wildflowers in your yard. They're colorful and beautiful, and Honey bees love them.



Wild Geranium



Bee Balm



Purple Coneflower



Goldenrod

**Answer Explanations:** 1 - Probably a wasp or yellow jacket. Bees don't normally bother us when we are eating. 2 - Probably a honey bee or bumble bee. Although wasps and flies do eat nectar, bees hop from flower to flower more often. 3 - Probably a wasp or yellow jacket. Although bees and bumble bees will sting to protect their nests, they are not as aggressive. 4 - Probably a wasp or yellow jacket. Bees make their hives from wax and carpenter bees burrow in wood. Wasps collect material from weathered wood and turn it into a pulp, like paper, and construct hives from that. 5 - Definitely a bee, maybe a honey bee or bumble bee. Wasps don't carry pollen in sacs. 6 - Probably a wasp, usually with no fuzz or very little, with telltale narrow wings. 7 - Bees tend to be fuzzy and hairy compared to wasps and flies, which can have spiky sparse hair. 8 - Yellow jackets are usually bright yellow. 9 - Wasps have the very thin "wasp-waist." 10 - Honey bees are the only ones that die after they sting, because their stinger is part of their abdomen.



Geauga Park District  
9160 Robinson Road  
Chardon, OH 44024-9148

# FIND YOUR ADVENTURE

## IN ONE OF YOUR 25 OPEN PARKS!



29th Annual

## \* Nature ARTS Festival

Sunday, August 2  
10 AM - 5 PM  
Big Creek Park

FREE  
Admission

- Indoor/Outdoor Juried Show featuring Nature Artists
- Writing Contest Winner Readings
- Food trucks, Workshops, Music & Entertainment

2 GREAT art  
FESTIVALS

Visit Chardon Arts Festival and take a FREE 5-minute ride on Lolly the Trolley to Big Creek Park!



Make it a day!

Renewal  
by Andersen

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[www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org)  
440-286-9516



\* Due to COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines, special events are subject to change or be cancelled. Please check our website for updates before heading out.