

PARKEXPLORER

GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT ACTIVITY GUIDE



FALL 2023

*Frothing Meadows'
Pollinator Play Garden*

4 Nature's role in the processes of healing and celebrating

6 Registration being required less often for hikes

7 Team up with us to plant 1,000 trees at Veterans Legacy Woods

15 Tree-inspired community art show applications available

UPCOMING EVENTS *Mark your calendars!*



All public programs and special events are subject to change or be cancelled. Please check our website for updates before heading out.



Try Something That's Out of This World!

Saturday, October 7, at Observatory Park, 4 - 6 PM

Each Planetary Trail lap equals celestial travel. Space limited, with T-shirts for the first 250 to register; medals & ribbons for all. Registration link on page 7.



Sundays, October 1, 8 & 15

1 - 5 PM at Swine Creek Reservation

Enjoy a horse-drawn wagon ride through the woods, gradually bursting with the colors of fall! First-come-first-served boarding. Rides of almost a mile generally last 15-20 minutes.



Shop this unique Nature-themed juried craft show

Friday, November 3, 5-8 PM & Saturday, November 4, 10 AM - 4 PM at The West Woods Nature Center

Come out Friday evening or Saturday to enjoy vendors indoors and out, finding handmade items for everyone on your list.



Saturday, December 2, at The West Woods Nature Center

11 AM - Noon, Noon - 1 PM, 1 - 2 PM or 2 - 3 PM

Brighten a senior's holiday season with your thoughtful creation through this make-and-GIVE event! Evergreen decorations that you create will accompany home-delivered meals for seniors by the Geauga County Department on Aging.

Registration required; please choose only one session. All supplies provided.



Celebrate the Longest Night of the Year

Thursday, December 21, 7:30 - 9:30 PM, at The West Woods

Explore the roots of our modern holiday celebrations indoors and out through treats, music, a craft and a magical candlelit walk through the forest highlighting various solstice traditions with costumed interpreters.

FALL PROGRAMS *on pages 7-14*

- 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
Naturalist-led hike recommended to take toward your Trekking Series reward



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



Virtual Program
Register and receive a login to participate from home



Fully Wheelchair/Stroller Accessible



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

Upcoming Events	2
Feature: Nature's Healing Spaces	4-5
Park Spotlight.....	6
October Programs	7-9 & 14
November Programs.....	10-11
December Programs	12-14
Archery Programs.....	14
Community Art Show News	15
Park Locations & Amenities	16-17
Geocaching	17
In Nature: Returning to Our Roots	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

www.geaugaparkdistrict.org
info@geaugaparkdistrict.com

Phone: 440-286-9516
 Fax: 440-214-3032

From the Desk of THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Executive Director
John Oros

Dear Geauga County Friends & Neighbors,

Welcome to the fall edition of our *Park Explorer*. I hope you and your family had a great summer. I was able to spend time with family and friends enjoying everything Northeast Ohio has to offer. Our lakes, rivers, streams and woodlands are truly inspiring.

As we gear up for some fresh fall fun, allow me to call your attention to some of the great opportunities your Geauga Park District offers you. Our new archery offerings have been very well received. In fact, recently at The Great Geauga County Fair, we were able to spearhead an initiative to once again offer fairgoers a chance to experience this exciting sport. If you tried archery at the fair for the first time, or are simply interested in honing your skills with a bow and arrow, we welcome you to sign up for one of our "Archery for Everyone" programs. Perhaps you are interested in learning target archery, or would like to introduce a friend or family member to archery hunting. Whatever your interest, a newcomer or not, we'd love to have you visit us for archery this season at Chickagami Park or, when the weather gets cold, at The Rookery.

Another event we're excited to host this fall is our 2nd Annual SPACE RACE at Observatory Park. Runners and walkers of all ages can enjoy this space-themed running/walking event the afternoon of Saturday, October 7. It's something almost anyone can try at any age, and no matter how far you go, you'll leave with a ribbon and a really nice feeling of accomplishment.

As summer turns to fall, I hope you take the time to enjoy the beauty of our trees' leaves changing to a spectacular array of colors. One of our newest parks, Veterans Legacy Woods, provides a scenic overlook to the east that is easily one of the best views in your entire Park District. Other parks with majestic forests exhibiting fall beauty include Big Creek Park, Swine Creek Reservation, and "Gaugau's Little Grand Canyon" aka Welton's Gorge.

With 27 parks, your Geauga Park District has a lot to offer. I hope you have a great time experiencing everything this season has to offer, as well. It certainly is an enjoyable one in Geauga County!

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS



Howard Bates



Jolene Carnabuci



Ray Guarino



Les LaGatta



Frank Stein

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

Nature's Healing Spaces

How one family's time in one special park helped their son beat cancer — and celebrate his strength

By Patrick Wallenhorst



Growing up in both Geauga and the surrounding area, my relationship with Frohring Meadows predates my son Henry's courageous journey. This 298-acre park was a constant companion during my own youth and a source of countless cherished memories. When I moved back to Ohio, I found the park had grown and provided even more adventure to the community. It quickly became our

chosen spot for family walks, picnics and celebrations, entwining its story with ours. Our most recent celebration for Henry was not our first at Frohing; we also used it two years ago to celebrate the birthday of my beautiful wife, Jessica.

The park's importance came into a sharp, poignant focus when Henry was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. And it

was here, after a grueling two-year battle, on the first day of this past July, that we held Henry's bell-ringing ceremony, a triumphant declaration of his victory over the disease. Against the backdrop of the rolling prairie and playful garden, Frohring Meadows resounded with Henry's laughter, the sound of a child reborn to the joy of living.

Our endeavor to raise awareness about childhood cancer drives us to share Henry's story. By revealing his bond with Frohring Meadows, we highlight the healing power of community spaces and the role they play in fostering resilience.

For Henry, the park was more than just a playground. It served as a sanctuary where he could reconnect with Nature and recover his strength. Observing wildlife became a source of joy and a welcome distraction from his treatment. The park offered him solace and helped him find his way back to childhood.

Frohring Meadows serves as a shining example of the impact well maintained parks can have on a community. It caters to various communal events, but its value extends beyond that. It's a comforting haven for families navigating life's trials, as it was for us



Photos by Hannah Lynne (Instagram @hannahlynne_photography_)

during Henry's journey.

The bell-ringing celebration was a day we'll never forget. Frohring Meadows will forever remain in our hearts, not just as the stage of our celebration, but as a beacon of hope and joy in our lives. Our gratitude to Geauga Park District for preserving such a space is immeasurable.

By sharing Henry's story, we hope to emphasize that parks are not merely recreational spaces. They are invaluable sources of healing and rejuvenation. Supporting park improvements and maintenance ensures these havens continue to serve our community and help families find hope amidst adversity. 🍁



Park Spotlight

Spend Some Time at Modroo Preserve

FIELD NOTES:

THIS MEADOW IS ALIVE, AND OUR LOCAL INSECT ORCHESTRA IS IN FULL SWING! COME SEE WHAT ALL THE (LITERAL) BUZZ IS ABOUT, ALSO WATCHING FOR WILDLIFE THAT MAY ALSO INCLUDE BUTTERFLIES, BIRDS, RABBITS, DEER AND A GARTER SNAKE CATCHING SOME QUALITY RAYS ON OUR SHORTENING DAYS.

Walking through a meadow can be an amazing and invigorating experience. The feeling of being surrounded by Nature in a vast open space can be very calming. Tall grasses and wildflowers sway in the breeze, and as the leaves begin to dry up and fall down, the sound of them rustling and crunching can be very grounding.

The colors of the meadow are waiting to be discovered, from golden-tipped goldenrod to the purples of coneflowers and asters. Modroo Preserve is approximately 53 acres of preserved meadow that is leased from Russell Township Park District. This property's single trail totals a little more than 3/4 of a mile by way of a cut-grass trail through the meadow. The Park District aims to foster this habitat for meadow- and grassland-nesting bird species such as Bobolinks, which are listed as an Ohio Species of Concern, native pollinators, sensitive woodland amphibians, and other uncommon birds.

Modroo Preserve represents one of the last farms in Russell Township and one of the few large parcels in the area. Its conservation comes thanks to Western Reserve Land Conservancy, many donors, a conservation buyer, Russell Township Park District, and the State of Ohio; State Senator John Eklund was also instrumental in securing funding through the state to help "Save Modroo Farm." 🍀



Registration is always required of programs for which attendance must be limited or a fee is charged. You'll find the words **Registration required** in bold near those listings on pages 7-14. However, good news this fall: **Fewer programs now require registration in advance.**

This should expand opportunities for you and your family and friends to experience naturalist-led hikes and similar programs, keep you off of some lengthy waiting lists, and alleviate the stress of needing to call us to cancel registration when something else comes up and you can no longer attend.

We hope you like the change – and to see you a little more often in the parks going forward!



Geauga Park District is planting **1,000 TREES!** at Veterans Legacy Woods in Newbury & Burton Townships

This past April, in celebration of Earth Day 2023, 274 volunteers and 19 sponsors assembled at Veterans Legacy Woods to plant 350 trees, bringing us leaps and bounds closer to restoring this former golf course to a more natural state ("reforesting the fairways"). Thanks again for your help! Our next goal is to plant 300 more trees throughout Thursday and Friday, October 12 and 13. Will you help with manpower or trees?

Assemble a team of five, 10 or 20 people to plant young trees and build protective fencing and we'll give you recognition and take-home gifts in return. Or, for businesses and organizations, levels of sponsorship will allow you to support between 11 and 133 new trees in your name.

Volunteer/sponsorship applications can be found on our website under *Activities*, then *Special Events & Art Shows*. Together we will plant 1,000 trees – let's do it by Earth Day 2024!

Continued thanks
to our very
generous sponsors



ONETREEPLANTED



OCTOBER

Registration begins at 10 AM on September 20 for Geauga residents and September 27 for others. Sign up online or by calling 440-286-9516.

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors

1 Fungus Among Us

Sunday, October 1, 2–3:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
From beautiful and delicious to deadly poisonous, Ohio is home to more than 2,000 different kinds of wild mushrooms. Join renowned Ohio photographer Ian Adams for this program, illustrated with dozens of color photos, as he introduces us to the fascinating world of Ohio's mushrooms. ♿

7 Fall Migration Bird Walk

Saturday, October 7, 8–10:30 AM
Frohring Meadows
Autumn is a wonderful time to view the southbound bird migration. October is peak time for sparrows, late warblers, kinglets, thrushes and more. Explore likely habitats to see what bird species we can observe.

7 The SPACE RACE!

Saturday, October 7, 4–6 PM
Observatory Park; Fee: \$20
As the sun goes down on October 7, run, jog or walk as many laps as you can in our two-hour timed race. Our course is .85-mile and each lap equates to some amount of travel through our solar system. One lap takes you to Mercury, 4 laps and you'll arrive at Mars, 10 laps gets you to Pluto, and so on. You will actually be racing yourself to see how far out of this world you can go! All who complete at least one lap will earn a Space Race medal, and a ribbon recognizing which planet you reached. Awards go to the top three male and female finishers. Register at <https://register.chronotrack.com/r/74327>. Fee: \$20 online before 10/6. Space is limited, race t-shirt for first 250 participants.

8 Hound Hike

Sunday, October 8, 9–10:30 AM
Swine Creek Reservation
Dogs and their humans, join us for a hike along the 1.2-mile medium-level Gray Fox Trail. Cold Nose Companions Dog Training will also meet us to share some helpful tips and tricks we can practice during the hike. Bring dog towels, water, a water bowl, poop scoop and bags for dog clean-up. One dog per handler, who must be able to fully control dog, kept on leash at all times (8 ft. max). Dogs must be non-aggressive to people and other dogs.

8 Fall Discovery Hike

Sunday, October 8, 10–11:30 AM
Beartown Lakes Reservation
Discover the natural wonders of the fall season as we hike along these beautiful trails. Must have the ability to hike 2 miles over relatively level terrain with a few rolling hills. Held rain or shine. Wear footwear that can get wet and muddy.

11 Hawk Watch

Wednesday, October 11, 8 AM–Noon
Veterans Legacy Woods
Enjoy the view looking over the valley of the western Cuyahoga and see if we can catch a glimpse of migrating raptors. Bring binoculars. Registration required. ♿

13 Howling with Coyotes

Friday, October 13, 7–9:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park
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.

13 Meet the Artists: Simone Majetich & Jim Trombo

Friday, October 13, 7–9 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Meet oil finger-painting artist Simone Majetich and fine arts photographer Jim Trombo and experience their collaborative show, "The Colors of Nature," celebrating the brilliance found in Nature captured in details great and small. Through color, texture and composition, a glimpse into the intricacies of the world around us is harnessed in a still moment. Scenes of striking landscapes and animals invite you to gaze upon Nature's beauty. ♿

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors

14 Partial Solar Eclipse

Saturday, October 14, 11:30 AM–2:30 PM
Observatory Park

Ohio sees about a third of the sun blocked in today's (very) partial solar eclipse. Drop in during this three-hour eclipse to get a safe view of the sun, tour the historic Nassau Astronomical Station, and get some pointers for next April's total solar eclipse! ♿

15 Autumn Kayak

(Ages 10+ w/adult)
Sunday, October 15, Noon–1:30 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve

Enjoy an autumn day while paddling the peaceful shores of this ancient glacial lake. Kayaking ability/experience required. Dress for weather. Held rain or shine, except in the event of a thunderstorm. **Registration required** beginning October 8 at 10 AM.

15 Nature Journaling: Coyotes

Sunday, October 15, 3–5:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park

Fee: \$20 Geauga resident, \$24 out-of-county
Attend this monthly series to learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. Our inspiration this month will be coyotes. Partially outdoors. **Registration required** by phone only.

17 Sap Bucket Painting Workshop

Tuesday, October 17, 6–9 PM
Claridon Woodlands

Fee: \$40 Geauga residents, \$45 out-of-county
Join artist Robert Kolcum to paint a beautiful woodland maple sugaring scene on a vintage sap bucket. Wine & cheese served. All materials instructions and refreshments included. Ages 21+. Dress for mess in an old shirt or painting smock. **Registration required.** ♿

17 Blackbrook Audubon: Amazing Arachnids with Nora Sindelar

Tuesday, October 17, 7–8:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center

Love 'em or hate 'em, come learn some natural history facts about spiders! You'll leave having clarified misconceptions and obtained knowledge about these animals totaling more than 3,800 species in North America. Presented with Blackbrook Audubon Society. ♿



19 Elderberries: Horse-Drawn Wagon Ride

Thursday, October 19, 11:30 AM–2:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation

Seniors, take a naturalist-led horse-drawn wagon ride to experience natural wonders unique to autumn. Also enjoy lunch provided by Geauga County Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center and a hands-on Nature activity while you wait for your ride. **Registration required.**

20 Inclusive Fall Wagon Ride

Friday, October 20,
10–10:30 AM & 11–11:30 AM
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge

Another special program for adults in the developmental disability community! Join us for a naturalist-led wagon ride pulled through the woods by a tractor to enjoy the wonders unique to autumn. We've also reserved the picnic shelter here for you to use after the program. Dress for the weather. Wagon not wheelchair accessible. **Registration required** for all participants.

20 Campfire Cooking: Forks & Foil

Friday, October 20, 5:30–7:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park

Fee: \$4 Geauga residents, \$6 out-of-county
Learn a new skill and get inspired for your next camping adventure! We'll practice classic hot dog-roasting on a stick, providing various toppings to help make your own gourmet dog, and end with campfire banana boats in foil for dessert. **Registration required.**

21 Scout Day: Lion Cub "Mountain Lion Adventure"

Saturday, October 21, 9:30–11:00 AM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Lion Cub Scouts, work toward your Mountain Lion Adventure! **Registration required** for scouts only, but adult leaders must attend.

21 Cross-County Fall Colors Van Trip

Saturday, October 21, 10 AM–3 PM
Veterans Legacy Woods

Join a naturalist on this van trip to visit areas around the county with spectacular views of fall colors. We'll begin at Veterans Legacy Woods and visit Punderson State Park, Burton Log Cabin for maple treats available for purchase, and wherever else the colors lead us! Bring a packed lunch. **Registration required.**

21 Welton's Gorge Backcountry Gorge Exploration

Saturday, October 21, 10 AM–12:30 PM
Welton's Gorge

Take a strenuous off-trail hike into a rocky woodland ravine to discover deep rock ledges, cool streams, salamanders and other unique features. Must be able to hike 2 miles without assistance off-trail in rugged terrain with slippery stream bottoms, steep grades and obstacles to cross. Dress for weather; wear sturdy shoes with good traction that can get wet. Bring a walking stick. Held rain or shine. **Registration required.**

21 Scout Day: Daisy Girl Scouts "Outdoor Art Maker"

Saturday, October 21, 1–2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Daisy Girl Scouts, work toward your Outdoor Art Maker badge and learn how to look at Nature like an artist! Program includes a hike. Dress for the weather. **Registration required** for scouts only, but adult leaders must attend.

21 Nature Trek Fitness Hike

Saturday, October 21, 1–3 PM
The West Woods, Turkey Ridge Shelter

Let's move it, people! Burn off those calories on this fitness hike, learning some cool Nature facts along the way. Must be able to hike at least 4.5 miles on hilly trails. Held rain or shine. Bring water. **Registration required.**

21 Nature at Night Hike

Saturday, October 21, 7–8:30 PM
Beartown Lakes Reservation

Walking through a park in the dark is a unique experience. All our senses become enhanced as we hike without the use of lights, making wildlife easier to discover. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

21 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, October 21, 2023, 7–11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station

Stop in to discover this awesome facility and join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society taking in the wonders of the night sky using our restored telescope! A limited number of people will be permitted inside the building at a time, which may result in a wait to enter. Cancelled if cloudy; check our website or social media for notice. ♿

22 Important Bird Area Walk

Sunday, October 22, 8–10 AM
Orchard Hills Park

Join Blackbrook Audubon Society on our Important Bird Area (IBA) walks on the fourth Sunday of each month. Good for beginners and experienced birders, group birding is a fun way to learn more bird identification tips firsthand. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. For more info, visit www.blackbrookaudubon.org. ♿

22 The Big Hike at Big Creek

Sunday, October 22, 9 AM–Noon
Big Creek Park, Maple Grove Shelter

Explore Big Creek by hiking as many trails as possible covering 5+ miles. Adults only. Bring water and a snack. **Registration required.**

22 Autumn Exploration Hike

Sunday, October 22, 11 AM–12:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park

Enjoy an autumn day leisurely exploring the forest and fields of this unique park. Approximately 1.5 miles.

22 Backcountry Hike: Preserved Property

Sunday, October 22, 1–4 PM, Chesterland (directions provided prior to program)

Join staff from Geauga Park District and Western Reserve Land Conservancy for a strenuous off-trail autumn hike of 4+ miles with a spectacular view across the Chagrin Valley. Expect hills, ravines, stream crossings and other obstacles. One-way hike with a return shuttle. Wear sturdy boots with good traction. **Registration required.**

24 Early Morning Hike

Tuesday, October 24, 8–9:30 AM
Swine Creek Reservation

Join a naturalist for an early morning up-paced hike on the hilly terrain.

26 Ansel's Cave Hike: History Written in Rock

Thursday, October 26, 9:30–11:30 AM
The West Woods

Hike with a naturalist to Ansel's Cave to discover its history written in rock – a rare opportunity to go into this restricted area! Dress for the weather and wear sturdy foot gear. Hike is 2 miles over hilly terrain with a stream crossing.

26 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, October 26, 7–9:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Singers and musicians take turns presenting tunes as others join in. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing, or simply enjoy as an audience member.

28 Headwaters Horse Ride

Saturday, October 28, 3–5 PM
Headwaters Park, Crystal Lake Picnic Area

Bring your own horse for this leisurely ride on the Buckeye and Maple Bridle trails, a total of about 4 miles out and back, enjoying autumn color, views of the reservoir and Nature lore. Expect gravel, bridge crossing, possibly bikes and/or Amish buggies. Helmets encouraged. Bring a shovel to clean up after your horse in the parking lot. **Registration required.**

28 Sunset/Moonrise Horseback Ride

Saturday, October 28, 6–8 PM
Headwaters Park,
Crystal Lake Picnic Area

Bring your own horse for this leisurely naturalist-led ride to experience the sights and sounds of autumn as the sun sets and the moon rises over the East Branch Reservoir, a 4-mile out-and-back ride on the Buckeye and Maple Bridle trails. Expect hills, gravel, bridge and stream crossings. Helmets encouraged. Bring a shovel to clean up after your horse in the parking lot. **Registration required.**

28 Full Moon Hike: The Hunter's Moon

Saturday, October 28, 6:30–7:30 PM
Observatory Park

Join us for this naturalist-led hike of 1.5-miles over level terrain at a gentle pace to experience Nature at night. Then, weather permitting, observe the rising full moon using park telescopes.

RECURRING PROGRAMS

1 8 15 Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides

Sundays, October 1, 8 & 15, 1–5 PM
Swine Creek Reservation

Enjoy the sights, sounds and scents of fall with a horse-drawn wagon ride! First-come, first-served boarding. Limited seating. No pets. Rides last about a half hour and are cancelled by bad weather. Last ride leaves at 4:30 PM.

10 24 Geauga Walkers

Tuesdays, 1–2:30 PM
October 10, Chickagami Park
October 24, Frohring Meadows

Active seniors, hike with a naturalist 1 to 1 1/2 miles on level terrain. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2167.

13 27 Ohio's Ancient Skywatchers

Friday, October 13, 7–8 PM
Observatory Park

Friday, October 27, 7–8 PM
Virtual program

Learn how Ohio's ancient Native American cultures left an astounding legacy of art and architecture, which offers fascinating clues about their astronomical knowledge. Followed by night sky viewing, weather permitting. October 27 is online via Zoom; register for the program and receive a link to join. **Registration required** for virtual session only.

29 Nature in Disguise

Sunday, October 29,
12:30–1:30 PM & 2:30–3:30 PM
The West Woods, Turkey Ridge

Meet Nature in disguise! Follow us along the trail to meet different critters (volunteers in costume) and learn about their habits. Kid costumes encouraged. **Registration required** for all attending.

29 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, October 29,
2–2:45 PM & 3–3:45 PM
Observatory Park, Robert
McCullough Science Center

Join us for a planetarium presentation about what to watch for in the night sky this week.

13 27 28 Night Sky Viewing

Fridays, October 13 & 27, 8–11 PM
Saturday, October 28, 8–11 PM
Observatory Park

If skies are clear, observe the night sky through the Oberle telescope and other telescopes spaced out around the plaza. Planetarium presentation if cloudy.

14 21 Hunter Education Course (2-Day Course)

Saturdays, October 14 & 21,
9 AM–3 PM

Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
Geauga Park District is pleased to train young and beginner hunters on safety, archery, ammunition, ethics and conservation during a two-day Hunter Education Course. Attendance is necessary both days (October 14 & 21) to complete the coursework, which ends with a quiz. Students under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult. **Registration required** through the Ohio Division of Wildlife at <https://oh-web.s3licensing.com/Event/Index>.

26 28 Timbertots: Tremendous Trees

(Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Thursday, October 26, 10–11 AM & 1–2 PM, Orchard Hills Park
Saturday, October 28, 10–11 AM & 1–2 PM, Big Creek Park, Meyer Center

Join Nora the Explorer to discover trees with hands-on activities and exploration. We'll also be creating a tree-themed art project to display for the upcoming community art show! Mostly outdoors; dress for the weather. **Registration required** for all attending.

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors

2 Homeschool Days: Amazing Mammals

(Ages 5-7 & 8-12)

Thursday, November 2, 10:30–Noon
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center

Homeschoolers are introduced to this amazing group of animals by sight, sound and signs! Indoor program followed by outdoor exploration for mammal signs, so dress for the weather. **Registration required** for all attending.

4 A Hike in Nature

Saturday, November 4, 9–11 AM
Swine Creek Reservation

While many plants and animals are settling down for the upcoming winter, there is still plenty of Nature to discover. Every season has something to offer. Let's explore this park to find interesting signs of the season.

4 Astrotots XL: Solar System Scrutiny

(Ages 6-11 w/adult)

Saturday, November 4, 9:30–10:45 AM & 1–2:15 PM, Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center

Explore fun facts, legends, lore and the latest amazing images of all eight great planets! Make-n-take a spacey craft, and be a contestant in our custom-made Solar System Jeopardy game! **Registration required** for ages 6-11 only. ♿

4 Backcountry Hike

Saturday, November 4, 1–4 PM
The West Woods, Affelder House

Join a naturalist for this strenuous 4+ mile off-trail hike in a mature woodland with stream crossings and steep ravines, featuring autumn views along Affelder Stream and Silver Creek plus one of the biggest tulip trees in the state of Ohio! Dress for the weather and wear sturdy boots or shoes with good traction that can get wet and muddy. **Registration required.**

5 Big Creek Park: Hidden Gems Hike

Sunday, November 5, 9:30–11:30 AM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center Parking Lot

Hike with a naturalist to discover natural wonders along the beautiful trails of Big Creek Park. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy foot gear. Approximately 2.5 miles over hilly terrain.



5 Citizen Scientists: Research Adventures in the Natural World

Sunday, November 5, 2:30–3:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

From breeding bird surveys to Bumblebee Watch and the Lost Ladybug Project, citizen scientists play an essential role in scientific research. Lisa Rainsong shares stories of citizen scientists whose interests and explorations took them on fascinating and unexpected paths that changed the direction of their lives. ♿

8 Ohio Forest Pests: What's Going on with My Trees?

Wednesday, November 8, 7–8:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Learn to accurately diagnose plant pests that may be a problem for your trees. Erik Draper, horticulture educator at The Ohio State University's Geauga County extension office, helps identify common maladies often found on Ohio trees. ♿

12 Geo Trail Wrap-up

Sunday, November 12, 8:30–Noon
Mountain Run Station

Our Geo Trail wraps up in November. Let's take a van to travel the 11 miles of The Maple Highlands Trail and collect all 19 caches using GPS and smartphones to earn your limited-edition Covered Bridge Geo Coin. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy foot gear. **Registration required.**

16 Elderberries: Ice Age Animals

Thursday, November 16, 1–2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Seniors, join Naturalist Karie to learn about the Ice Age and the amazing animals that lived at that time! Refreshments served. A collaboration with the Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.** ♿

16 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, November 16, 7–9:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Singers and musicians take turns presenting tunes as others join in. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing, or simply enjoy as an audience member. ♿

18 Scout Day: Cadette Girl Scout "Eco Trekker Badge"

Saturday, November 18, 9–11:30 AM
The West Woods

Discover your important role in Nature while working toward this badge and learning to conserve, preserve and protect the Great Outdoors! Dress for the weather. **Registration required** for scouts only, but adult leaders must attend.

18 Waterfowl Migration Van Trip

Saturday, November 18, 9 AM–4 PM
The West Woods

November ushers in colder weather, and with it comes the waterfowl. We'll keep our options open as we visit Lake Erie and other large bodies of water seeking gulls, ducks, grebes and more. Bring a sack lunch and binoculars, and dress warm. **Registration required.**

18 Fire-Building Techniques

Saturday, November 18, 10 AM–Noon
Sunnybrook Preserve, Lodge

With cold weather on the way, it may be good to practice some fire-building skills. Let's explore some modern fire-building techniques and ways to improvise. Build your fire to roast a marshmallow or two. **Registration required.** ♿

18 Scout Day: Webelos "Earth Rocks"

Saturday, November 18, 1–3:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Webelos, work toward your Earth Rocks Elective Adventure. Program indoors and outdoors, so dress for the weather. **Registration required** for scouts only, but adult leaders must attend.

18 Buckeye Trail Highlight Hike

Saturday, November 18, 2–3:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Maple Grove

The Buckeye Trail winds nearly 1,444 miles around Ohio. Without hiking the entire trail, let's visit a Geauga Park District park that follows the Blue Blazes. Must be able to hike around 4 miles. Held rain or shine. Bring water.

18 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, November 18, 7–11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station

Discover this awesome facility and join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society taking in the wonders of the night sky using our restored telescope! A limited number of people will be permitted inside the building at a time, which may result in a wait to enter. Cancelled if cloudy; check our website or social media for notice.

19 Welton's Gorge Backcountry Gorge Exploration

Sunday, November 19, 9:30–Noon
Welton's Gorge

Take a strenuous off-trail hike into a rocky woodland ravine to discover deep rock ledges, cool streams, salamanders and other unique features. Must be able to hike 2 miles without assistance off-trail in rugged terrain with slippery stream bottoms, steep grades and obstacles to cross. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes with good traction that can also get wet. Bring a walking stick. Held rain or shine. **Registration required.**

19 Hound Hike

Sunday, November 19, 9:30–10:30 AM
The West Woods

Dogs and their humans, join us for a 2-mile medium-level hike along Ansel's Cave. Cold Nose Companions Dog Training will also meet us to share some helpful tips and tricks we can practice during the hike. Bring dog towels, water, a water bowl, poop scoop and bags for dog clean-up. One dog per handler, who must be able to fully control dog, kept on leash at all times (8 ft. max). Dogs must be non-aggressive to people and other dogs.

19 Nature's Ornaments: Make It Yourself!

Sunday, November 19, Noon–4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Register to drop in at any time during program hours and make one or all of these ornaments from natural items! **Registration required** for all attending; children must be accompanied by an adult.

19 Nature Journaling: Turkeys

Sunday, November 19, 3–5:30 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center

Fee: \$20 Geauga residents, \$24 out-of-county
Attend this monthly series to learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. Our inspiration this month will be turkeys. Partially outdoors. **Registration required** by phone only.

RECURRING PROGRAMS

3 4 Astrotots: The Solar System's Simple Side

(Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Friday, November 3, 9:30–10:30 AM,
11 AM–Noon, & 1–2 PM,

Saturday, November 4, 11:30 AM–12:30 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center

Meet our planetary neighbors and discover how Earth measures up to each of them. Make-n-take an out-of-this-world craft, and join us for a solar system sing-along. You won't want to miss our special pre-K planetarium show, and of course Commander Melvin will be waiting to give you a high five! **Registration required** for ages 3-5 only.

3 4 Holly Days Artisan Boutique & Mistletoe Market

Friday, November 3, 5–8 PM

Saturday, November 4, 10 AM–4 PM
The West Woods

Browse a premier selection of Nature-themed holiday decor and gifts for sale by regional artisans – the perfect opportunity to find unique, handmade items for everyone on your list! Join us Friday evening or Saturday to enjoy indoor AND outdoor vendors, plus the Mistletoe Market offering handmade gifts created by young artisans.

19 Nature Night Lecture Series: The Unusual Birds of Winter

Sunday, November 19, 7–8:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

In winter, we may see large numbers of birds visiting from the north. These are not our typical, year-round resident birds; rather, they are called irruptive species, and this presentation highlights them: Snowy Owls, Evening Grosbeaks, Red Crossbills and more!

24 Hike Your Turkey Off

Friday, November 24, 9 AM–Noon
The West Woods, Turkey Ridge

With Thanksgiving leaving us feeling a bit over-stuffed, it's time to hike that turkey off with a steady-paced, calorie-burning eight-mile hike. That's right, 8 miles – one mile for every extra helping! **Registration required.**

25 Ansel's Cave Hike: History Written in Rock

Saturday, November 25, 10 AM–Noon
The West Woods

Hike with a naturalist to Ansel's Cave to discover its history written in rock – a rare opportunity to go into this restricted area! Dress for the weather and wear sturdy foot gear. Hike is 2 miles over hilly terrain with a stream crossing.

25 Fins, Feathers & Fun

Saturday, November 25, 1:30–3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Enjoy an afternoon of fun while learning about the wildlife around us through hands-on exhibits and activities for all ages. Indoor and outdoor options.

7 21 Geauga Walkers

Tuesdays, 1–2:30 PM

November 7, Welton's Gorge

November 21, Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve

Active seniors, hike with a naturalist 1 to 1 1/2 miles on mostly level terrain. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2167.

10 24 Exploring the Moon

Friday, November 10, 7–8 PM, Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center

Friday, November 24, 7–8 PM
Virtual program

Learn all about Earth's nearest neighbor! From eclipses to moon-watching to the latest robotic explorers, you'll gain a "full phase" of moon knowledge. Followed by night sky viewing, weather permitting. November 24 is online via Zoom; register for the program and receive a link to join. **Registration required** for virtual session only.

26 Important Bird Area Walk

Sunday, November 26, 8–10 AM
Orchard Hills Park

Join Blackbrook Audubon Society on our Important Bird Area (IBA) walks on the fourth Sunday of each month. Good for beginners and experienced birders, group birding is a fun way to learn more bird identification tips firsthand. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. For more info, visit www.blackbrookaudubon.org.

26 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, November 26, 2–2:45 PM & 3–3:45 PM, Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center

A planetarium presentation about what to watch for in the night sky this week.

26 Full Moon Hike: The Beaver Moon

Sunday, November 26, 5:30–6:30 PM
Observatory Park

Join us for this naturalist-led hike of 1.5-miles over level terrain at a gentle pace to learn all about beavers and experience Nature at night. Then, weather permitting, observe the rising full moon using park telescopes.

27 Early Morning Hike

Monday, November 27, 8–9 AM
Frothing Meadows, Katydid Lodge

Join us for an early morning up-paced hike on flat terrain. Held rain or shine.

10 11 24 25 Night Sky Viewing

Fridays, November 10 & 24, 8–11 PM
Saturdays, November 11 & 25, 7–11 PM
Observatory Park

If skies are clear, observe the night sky through the Oberle telescope and other telescopes spaced out around the plaza. Planetarium presentation if cloudy.

15 19 Timbertots: Getting Ready for Winter

(Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Wednesday, November 15, 10–11 AM & 1–2 PM, Claridon Woodlands

Sunday, November 19, 1:30–2:30 PM & 3:30–4:30 PM, Big Creek Park, Meyer Center

Grab those coats and hats and head outdoors to see how Nature is getting ready for winter! Dress accordingly. **Registration required** for all attending.

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors



2 Holiday Greens Workshop

Saturday, December 2, 9 AM–Noon & 1–4 PM, Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
Fee: \$27 Geauga residents, \$30 out-of-county
Decorate for the holidays by making a beautiful arrangement from fresh evergreens. Select from a table arrangement, a door swag, or a wreath. Visit our website under News & Updates for photos resembling each project and more specific project descriptions. Ribbon, evergreens and pine cones will be provided; bring any accents you want to add, pruners and a plastic bag to protect your car seat from water. **Registration required.** ♿

2 Hound Hike

Saturday, December 2, 9–10:30 AM
Orchard Hills Park

Dogs and their humans, join us for a 2-mile hike along the medium-level Macintosh Trail. Cold Nose Companions Dog Training will also share some helpful tips and tricks we can practice during the hike. Bring dog towels, water, a water bowl, poop scoop and bags for dog clean-up. One dog per handler, who must be able to fully control dog, kept on leash at all times (8 ft. max). Dogs must be non-aggressive to people and other dogs.

2 Greens for Giving

Saturday, December 2, 11 AM–Noon, Noon–1 PM, 1–2 PM, 2–3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

Join Geauga Park District for this make-and-GIVE event to create 300+ evergreen decorations to be given to seniors to brighten their holiday season along with Geauga County Department on Aging's home-delivered meals. All supplies provided. **Registration required;** please register for only one session. ♿

2 High School Scout Snowshoe

Saturday, December 2, 12:30–2 PM
Orchard Hills Park Lodge

All scouts in grades 9–12, join us for a snowshoe adventure just for you to discover a new way to enjoy the winter season! We'll cover the basic use of snowshoes, which may also meet some requirements for the Girl Scouts' Snow Adventure or Boy Scouts' Snow Sports badges. **Registration required** for scouts only, but adult leaders must attend.

2 Hidden Gems Hike

Saturday, December 2, 2–3 PM
Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park
Take a naturalist-led hike on these beautiful trails to discover some of Nature's hidden gems! Must be able to hike 2 miles over hilly terrain. Held rain, snow or shine. Wear footwear that can get wet and muddy.

5 Geauga Walkers Hike & Holiday Lunch

Tuesday, December 5, Noon–2:45 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
This is the annual holiday potluck luncheon for seniors who participate in Geauga Walkers. If you're coming, please bring a dish to share. Hike at noon and lunch at 1 PM, followed by an indoor presentation. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2167.

8 Make a Particle Detector

Friday, December 8, 7–8 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center
Make a "cloud chamber" to detect particles from outer space, and learn what these cosmic rays can teach us about the universe. Followed by night sky viewing, weather permitting. **Registration required.** ♿



9 Ho Ho Ho Hiking with Santa & Buddy the Elf

Saturday, December 9, 10–11:30 AM & 1–2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Discover the wonders of the season on a magical hike with Santa Claus and Buddy the Elf! Santa will also be available after the hike for photos and wish lists. **Registration required.**

9 Backcountry Hike

Saturday, December 9, 1–3:30 PM
The Rookery
Explore for evidence of wetland wildlife like beavers, otters and herons. Prepare for on- and off-trail conditions, especially wet, muddy hiking, stepping over logs, and crossing streams, as we venture backcountry. Held rain, snow or shine. **Registration required.**

9 Nature at Night Hike

Saturday, December 9, 7–8:30 PM
Russell Uplands Preserve
Walking through a park in the dark is a unique experience. Even during the hush of late fall, all our senses become enhanced as we hike without the use of lights, making wildlife easier to discover. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

10 Pre-Winter Walk & Warm-Up

Sunday, December 10, 9–10:30 AM & 1–2:30 PM, Frohring Meadows
Take a naturalist-led hike to explore the winter landscape of this open meadow, then gather by the indoor fireplace with a cup of hot coffee or cocoa. Dress for the weather.

10 Fire-Building Techniques

Sunday, December 10, 10 AM–Noon
Headwaters Park, Boathouse
With cold weather on the way, it may be good to practice some fire-building skills. Let's explore some modern fire-building techniques and ways to improvise. Build your fire to roast a marshmallow or two. **Registration required.** ♿

10 Nature Journaling: Creative Writing

Sunday, December 10, 10 AM–12:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
Fee: \$20 Geauga residents, \$24 out-of-county
A monthly series to learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. This month we'll work on creative writing activities. Partially outdoors. **Registration required** by phone only.

10 Ansel's Cave Hike: History Written in Rock

Sunday, December 10, 10 AM–Noon
The West Woods
Hike with a naturalist to Ansel's Cave to discover its history written in rock – a rare opportunity to go into this restricted area! Dress for the weather and wear sturdy foot gear. Hike is 2 miles over hilly terrain with a stream crossing.

10 Research in Our Parks: Survey Results

Sunday, December 10, 2:30–3:30 PM (Virtual)
Learn about cool discoveries made in Geauga parks during butterfly, dragonfly and bird surveys conducted this past spring to fall. Held online via Zoom; register and we will send you a Zoom link before the program. **Registration required.**



Photo by Chris Parker

14 Elderberries: "You Saved 1968"

Thursday, December 14, 1–2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Seniors, come enjoy a fun and fact-filled retrospection of America's home stretch of The Space Race! Reacquaint yourself with the Apollo 8 mission and its profound, serendipitous influence on the environmental movement. Refreshments served. A collaboration with the Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. Registration required.

14 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, December 14, 7–9:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Singers and musicians take turns presenting tunes as others join in. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing, or simply enjoy as an audience member.

15 Paracord Holiday Ornament (Adults only)

Friday, December 15, 6–7:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Fee: \$10 Geauga residents, \$14 out-of-county residents
Choose two holiday-inspired paracord colors and learn how to weave a global knot. This is an intermediate, decorative knot that needs a bit of patience. We'll work together step by step to create a charming little ornament. Registration required.

16 Welton's Gorge Late Fall Trail Hike

Saturday, December 16, 10–11:30 AM
Welton's Gorge
Hike with a naturalist along the trails of Welton's Gorge (but not into the gorge) to discover signs of the winter season. Must be able to hike at least 2 miles. Held rain, snow or shine.

16 Holiday Plant Hike

Saturday, December 16, 2–3:30 PM
Big Creek Park
Forests here have mostly gone dormant in the winter, but many plants we can still find have a holiday or seasonal connection. Join us on this walk through a winter woods to discover a variety of plants.

16 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, December 16, 7–11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau
Astronomical Station
Discover this awesome facility and join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society taking in the wonders of the night sky using our restored telescope! if cloudy; check our website or social media for notice.

19 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, December 19, 1–2:30 PM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
Active seniors, hike with a naturalist 1 to 1 1/2 miles on easy level terrain. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2167.

20 Early Morning Hike

Wednesday, December 20, 8–9 AM
Headwaters Park
Join us for an early morning up-paced hike on slightly hilly terrain. Held rain, snow or shine.



21 Winter Solstice Celebration!

Thursday, December 21, 7:30–9:30 PM
The West Woods
Celebrate the longest night of the year as we explore the roots of our modern holiday celebrations indoors and out. Enjoy treats, hot beverages and music; create a solstice themed craft; stroll the self-guided Solstice Traditions Trail, a magical, candlelit route through the forest, complete with a bonfire; and watch interactive skits highlighting solstice traditions of various civilizations with costumed interpreters. Please dress for the weather, as much of the program is outside. No dogs. We look forward to celebrating the Winter Solstice with you!

24 Important Bird Area Walk

Sunday, December 24, 8–10 AM
Orchard Hills Park
Join Blackbrook Audubon Society on our Important Bird Area (IBA) walks on the fourth Sunday of each month. Good for beginners and experienced birders, group birding is a fun way to learn more bird identification tips firsthand. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. For more info, visit www.blackbrookaudubon.org.

26 Winter Break Planetarium Show

Tuesday, December 26, 1–2 PM & 3–4 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough
Science Center
Get some daytime practice with winter stargazing during our all-ages winter break planetarium shows!

26 Full Moon Hike: The Bear Moon

Tuesday, December 26, 6:30–7:30 PM
Observatory Park
Take a naturalist-led hike of 1.5-miles over level terrain at a gentle pace to learn about how bears spend the winter and experience Nature at night. Then, weather permitting, observe the rising full moon using park telescopes.

27 Wildlife Detective Training

Wednesday, December 27, 10–11:30 AM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Join your family to take a wildlife artifact quiz and train to be an official wildlife detective! Registration required.

28 Nature Explorers: All About Owls (Ages 6-11 w/adult)

Thursday, December 28, 1–3 PM
Big Creek Park, The Meyer Center
Let's check out owl pellets, learn owl calls, and hunt for owl habitat indoors and out! Dress for the weather. Registration required for all attending.



29 Grandparents in the Park: Winter Wildlife

Friday, December 29, 10:30–Noon
Big Creek Park, Cherry Room
Grandparents and grandchildren, join a naturalist for fun hands-on indoor activities celebrating our winter wildlife. Please bring a snack to share; beverages provided. Registration required for all attending.

31 New Year's Eve Nature Celebration!

Sunday, December 31, 11 AM–12:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Celebrate New Year's Eve with fun activities for all ages, including a "toast" at noon! Pizza and beverages provided. Mostly indoors, but may go outside if weather permits. Registration required for all attending.

December programs continued on page 14

RECURRING PROGRAMS

2 3 Weave a Double-Walled Tote Basket 2-Day Workshop

Saturday & Sunday, December 2 & 3
1–5 PM, Holbrook Hollows, Lodge

Fee: \$70 Geauga residents,
\$80 out-of-county residents

For advanced weavers, build on your skills by weaving a double-walled tote basket over two days. Must be able to follow a basket pattern for design detail. **Registration required.** ♿

3 4 Timbertots: Evergreen Artists!

(Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Sunday, December 3, 10–11:30 AM & 1:30–3 PM
Monday, December 4, 10–11:30 AM & 1–2:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation Lodge

Discover through fun activities all the reasons evergreens are excellent in Nature and at home! We'll use real greens to make a centerpiece to take home, with bows and pine cones provided; bring small decorations if desired, and hand clippers if you have them. Partially outdoors, so dress for the weather. **Registration required for all attending.**

8 9 Night Sky Viewing

Friday, December 8, 8–11 PM
Saturday, December 9, 7–11 PM
Observatory Park

If skies are clear, observe the night sky through the Oberle telescope and other telescopes spaced out around the plaza. Planetarium presentation if cloudy. ♿👁️



ARCHERY FOR EVERYONE

Archery Games for Adults

Friday, October 6, 10:30 AM–Noon
Saturday, October 14, 3–4:30 PM
Chickagami Park

Take the next step in improving your aim through playing archery games. Must have participated in our Introduction to Archery program to attend. Adults only. **Registration required.**

Archery Practice (Ages 9+)

Friday, October 6, 1–1:30 PM,
1:45–2:15 PM, 2:30–3 PM
Chickagami Park

Thursday, December 28, 1–1:30 PM,
1:45–2:15 PM, The Rookery,
Great Blue Heron Lodge

These 30-minute sessions are for you to take the next step in improving your aim through practice. Must have participated in our Introduction to Archery program to register. Children must be accompanied by adult. **Registration required.**

Archery Games for Families

Saturday, October 14, 10:30–Noon
Chickagami Park
Thursday, December 28, 3–4:30 PM
Saturday, December 30, 11 AM–12:30 PM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge

Take the next step in improving your aim through playing archery games. All participants must be ages 9+ and have already taken our Introduction to Archery program. **Registration required for all attending.**

Introduction to Archery for Families

Saturday, October 14, 1–2:30 PM
Sunday, October 29, 10:30–Noon
Chickagami Park

Thursday, December 28, 10:30 AM–Noon
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
Families with children ages 9+, learn the basics of target archery together. Participants must be 50" or taller, wear closed-toe shoes and be accompanied by an adult if under 18 years of age. No younger children, please. **Registration required for all attending.**

October's archery programs are at Chickagami Park's outdoor archery range.

December's archery programs move indoors to The Rookery's Great Blue Heron Lodge.

Introduction to Archery for Adults

Sunday, October 29, 1–2:30 PM
Sunday, October 29, 3–4:30 PM
Chickagami Park

Learn the basics of target archery. Participants must wear closed-toe shoes. **Registration required.**

Archery Games for Kids (Ages 9-16)

Saturday, December 30, 9–10:30 AM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge

Kids, take the next step in improving your aim through playing archery games. Must have participated in our Introduction to Archery program to attend and be accompanied by an adult if under 18 years of age. **Registration required.**

Applications now being accepted to enter your artwork inspired by trees



Let the trees inspire your creativity! Geauga Park District is excited to bring you this community art show opening Saturday February 3, 2024, at The West Woods Nature Center. Applications are available now on our website under *Activities*, then *Special Events & Art Shows* toward the bottom. Or pick up a hard copy application from The West Woods Nature Center on Route 87 in Russell Township or Big Creek Park's Donald W. Meyer Center in Chardon Township. Artwork drop-off will be January 22 and 23, 2024.



Returning this season Two popular cool-weather activities at The West Woods



The Bird in the Hand Feeding Station, where birds land right on your hand for some bird seed

Snowshoe borrowing when the white stuff is generous (free for Geauga residents)



Find details on our website under *Activities*, then *Birdwatching* or *Snowshoeing*

Geauga Gems Trekking Series Continues in 2024!



Geauga Gems Trekking Series will kick off its fifth year, the year of the amethyst, with registration opening January 1 for Geauga residents and January 15 for others. Sign-up is FREE for all Geauga residents but costs \$10 for out-of-county residents. For more information as soon as it becomes available, visit our website under *Activities*, then *Hiking, Walking & Running*.

Thank You
to All of Our
Generous
Donors
Donations to
Gauga Park District
May through
July 2023

Blackbrook Audubon Society	Nature Scopes donation	\$200.00
Boy Scouts of America #383	Eagle Scout Emily Girard donation	\$90.87
Cleveland Foundation	Lewis & Ruth Affelder Fund	\$526.75
David Gifford	Donation in memory of Frank Murzynski	\$100.00
Diane L. Dehring	Reforestation of Veterans Legacy Woods In memory of Frank Murzynski	\$200.00
Dorothy J. Miller	Reforestation of Veterans Legacy Woods In memory of Frank Murzynski	\$100.00
Elzbieta Simpson	Reforestation of Veterans Legacy Woods In memory of Frank Murzynski	\$100.00
Gerber	Donation In memory of Frank Murzynski	\$200.00
Jenny Haller	Bench plaque in memory of Karen Habanek	\$500.00
Klara Seefeld	Reforestation of Veterans Legacy Woods In memory of Frank Murzynski	\$100.00
Michelle Murzynski	Reforestation of Veterans Legacy Woods In memory of Frank Murzynski	\$800.00
One Tree Planted	1,000 Trees Earth Day	\$3,000.00
TDD Cares Foundation, INC.	2023 Service Day Contribution	\$1,000.00

Be an Agent of Discovery!



Ever played Pokémon GO? Have you tried our new location-based, Nature-themed game at The West Woods? We've been debuting new missions and challenges to play each month — and new Park District swag to earn when you complete them.

It's easy to download the free Agents of Discovery app on your mobile device. (Scan this QR code for quick access.) Then just open it up while you're at The West Woods and search for available missions to play. We'll tell you which trails to walk, and as you approach each challenge, it will become available for you to play. Complete all eight challenges to master that month's mission, then head to the nature center to collect your prize. Have fun!



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 – Access to TMHT 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>			✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	
Frohning Meadows 16780 Savage Road, Bainbridge, 44023 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 3.5</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Headwaters Park – Access to TMHT 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 & 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>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓				

View the current fee schedule on our website under Reservations. All enclosed lodges, but not all open shelters, are equipped with electricity.

ADVENTURES in Geocaching



N 41° 37.878
W -81° 11.440

Check out the new geocache
at Whitlam Woods in Hambden Twp.

Expires January 1, 2025. Find details on our website under Activities.

We must confess, these woods can be a muddy mess. That's why this one is hid upon a ridge. No need to seek down in the creek; this cache hangs out where two tree trunks did sprout. You've got it made, but if that's too vague, if you want to prevail, search left of the trail.

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>	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓				
Modroo Preserve 15695 Hemlock Road, Russell, 44072 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 0.8</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 – Access to TMHT 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: 4.68</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Welton's Gorge 13973 Hale Road, Burton, 44021 <i>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 1.8</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>														

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.

Returning to Our Roots

to Keep us Healthier & Living Longer

Living in Geauga County, we may take for granted the environment of a region that promotes the Great Outdoors.

During the past few years, natural areas filled with people reconnecting with Nature as human health faced a global threat. Confronted with shutdowns and isolation, people turned to outdoor pursuits including hiking, dog-walking, gardening, bird watching, biking, paddling, horseback riding, camping and fishing. These budget-friendly, mentally and physically healthy activities experienced a resurgence as park trails were packed with people, outdoor equipment sold out, and people adopted pets. The wonder, beauty and sensory stimulation of celebrating the “who cooks for you” sound of a barred owl, the sight of the perky antics of a Carolina Wren, the smell of a fragrant buttonbush in bloom, and the feel of working the soil uplift the spirit and refresh the soul.

Nurturing the earth as a steward of its natural resources is the rationale for the preserve, conserve and protect mission behind Geauga Park District. Geauga County residents know that they are fortunate to live in Northeast Ohio and have chosen to support the Park District for more than 60 years. The wondrous biodiversity of plants and animals of the forest, meadow, stream, wetland and lake ecosystems of this region is a gift that residents treasure. Most people realize those natural gifts will be inherited, and will promote the health and longevity of present and future generations. 🌿





Create a Simple Autumn Tree Painting

You will need: black/brown, blue, yellow, red and white craft paint, a brown paper bag (one that is bigger and made of thicker paper), cotton balls, cotton swabs

If you followed along creating a tree for each season this year, you now have a set of four to display! Congrats!



First, take a fall hike to look up at the trees. Observe how the leaves are turning, or have turned, colors as they stop producing green chlorophyll.

1. Cut a square/rectangle from a big paper bag; it's made of nice, thick paper and often easy to find around the home. Crinkle it up a bit to create some texture in the paper. Use a cotton ball to smear light blue/gray paint from edge to edge for the background. Let dry.

2. With black or brown paint, use a cotton swab to draw a straight, thick line from top to bottom. You can do it right through the center or off to one side. Then create a few thick lines diagonally and extend them to the paper's edge. Let dry.

3. Extend some thinner lines out from the diagonal lines. You can even draw some from the main thick vertical line. Let dry.

4. Use the yellow and red paint, and also mix some to make orange or your favorite fall color. Use a cotton swab to dab dots along the sides of the lines, filling the tree up with leaves, and also make some falling down.

5. Finally, let the paint dry completely. If you'd prefer to flatten your painting out, place between two sheets of paper and put inside a thick book.



Here's an idea: Frame your paintings (like we did here) and enter your work into our upcoming community art show!

Exhibit will be on display February 3 through April 2, 2024, at The West Woods Nature Center. See page 15 for details.



FALL FUN WITH LETTERS

In the boxes to the left, find the four-letter words that go along with the adjective above them. The word's letters are connected going in either direction but not diagonal. Then circle the first letter of the word in each box. Going row by row, place those circled letters on the blank lines below to complete the fall poem.

howling

D W
N I

marching

N A
T S

moon

L O
G W

screech

L S
W O

hazel

T U
S N

pouring

A I
R N

great

D I
E A

whitetail

R E
D E

spooky

Y E
E S

'Tis the season of apples and cider,
owls and bats and a scary spider,
shorter days and longer nights,
birds well into their southern flights,
and hats and coats to help keep warm
when blustery and cold become the norm.
Leaves of yellow, orange, red and brown,
beautiful and colorful, will soon fall down,
but before they all do and you're stuck inside,
come to the park for a fall

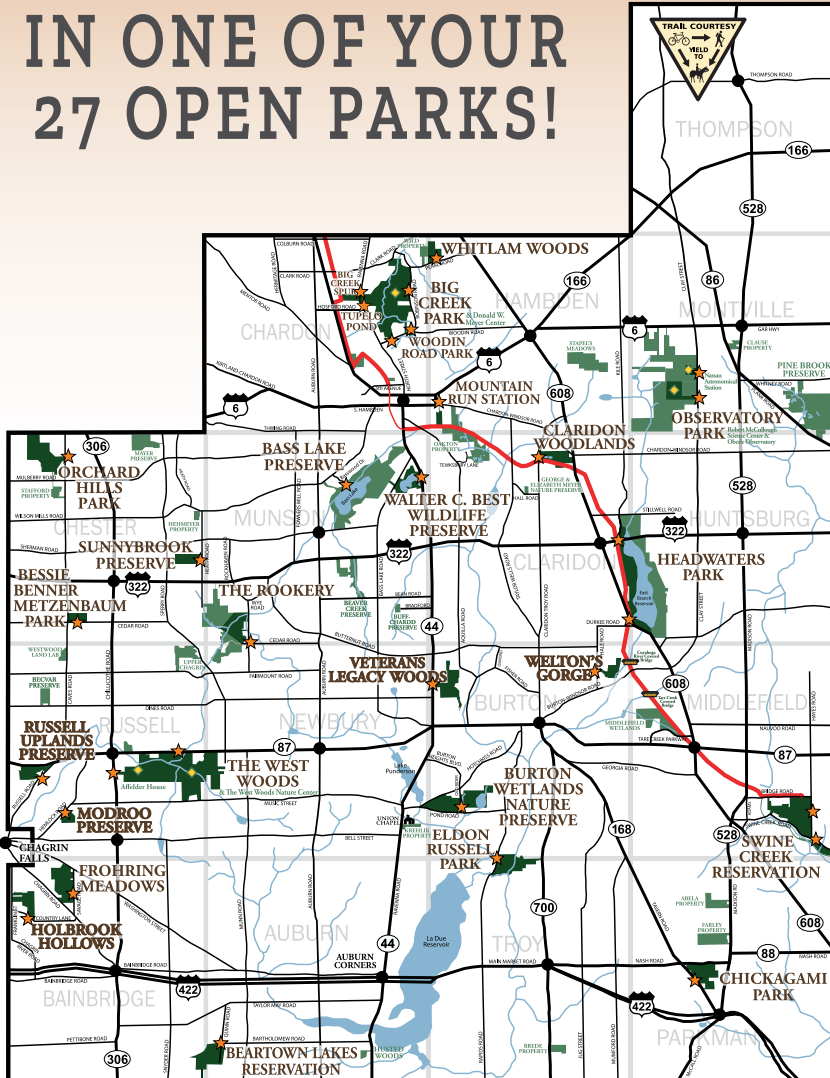
_____!



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HOW FAR CAN YOU GO?

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 7
4-6 PM**

**Observatory Park
in Montville Township**

*Space is
limited,
open now
and filling
fast!
Details on
page 7*

