

PARKEXPLORER

GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT ACTIVITY GUIDE



SUMMER 2024

4 Recharging at Headwaters Park's Campsite G

6 When we came together to watch the total solar eclipse

16 Mission accomplished! Wrapping up 1,000 Trees at Veterans Legacy Woods

17 Nominees are in for our Top 10 Trails Contest — cast your vote online now!

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.

★ Nights Out ★ in the Parks

A great way to spend a summer evening!

Music Concerts at Big Creek Park's Amphitheater at 7 PM

Bent String Band 7/13
Hot Jazz Seven 8/17

Outdoor Movie Nights at Observatory Park (activities begin at 8:30 PM, movies at dark)

Guardians of the Galaxy (PG-13) 7/6
Migration (G, animated) 8/3

Moths & Meteors Overnight Event



Sunday, August 11, 9 PM - Monday, August 12, 6 AM at Observatory Park

Spend a night under the stars and take in the Perseid Meteor Shower, plus up-close views of night-flying moths attracted to our black light and mercury vapor lamps.

Registration required, and don't delay — only 200 people can attend!



THE GREAT GEAUGA COUNTY FAIR

Thursday, August 29 - Monday, September 2 • 11 AM - 7 PM

Visit our building in the Natural Resources Area for the unveiling of our fan-voted Top 10 Trails (details on page 17) and to encounter the spectacular Monarch Butterfly!

Daily Monarch program/taggings at 3:30 PM as butterflies are available

SAVE THE DATE SATURDAY OCTOBER 5!

How far will you go?

Watch for registration (opening this summer) to run, jog or walk this two-hour race in which each completed lap equates to space travel!



SUMMER PROGRAMS *on pages 7-15*

- 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

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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 the 2nd & 4th Fridays & Saturdays of each month 6 – 11 PM and every other Sunday of each month 1 – 4 PM

The Maple Highlands Trail and Welton’s Gorge are open daily dawn till dusk

NEW HOURS FOR WELTON’S GORGE

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,

Summer has arrived! To start, though, I’d like to recognize the success of the total solar eclipse on April 8. We couldn’t have asked for better weather, a better venue, and a more enthusiastic crowd! Geauga Park District hosted approximately 3,200 eclipse-watchers at the Geauga County Fairgrounds. We extend our sincere appreciation to the members of the Fair Board, our Geauga Park District Special Events Coordinator Holly Sauder, and our Geauga County community at large. You helped create a once-in-a-lifetime event that we will never forget. Thank you!

Now, on to summer at our newest park, Troy Wetlands. Just opened to the public on Thanksgiving Day 2023, this park has spent 2024 neck-and-neck with LaDue Reservoir for the highest number of bird species spotted in Geauga County this year, according to eBird.com. As of May 20, Troy Wetlands had 137 species and LaDue had 140. Troy Wetlands will remain a birding hotspot for the remainder of the summer and through fall migration. We hope you get a chance to visit!

To round out your summer, we also hope you and your family can spend quality time in your Geauga parks. From one of our newest facilities, Veterans Legacy Woods’ Tribute Lodge, to some of our legacy shelters like Swine Creek Reservation’s Lakeside Shelter, we are confident that all of our lodges and shelters provide access to truly unique experiences in beautiful park settings for your family gatherings. Many of our most popular locations are fully booked over the weekends, but please check availability for weekdays. We lead a busy lifestyle, and a last-minute weeknight picnic with family may be exactly what is needed to recharge.

With summer also comes the opportunity to hike, bike, camp, fish, or simply sit at a park bench or picnic table and soak up the sun. Regardless of your adventure, our staff welcomes you to Geauga Park District. Get out and enjoy the season!

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

Solitude at Site G

By Jenny Jerman

I didn't look for it or expect it, but a wonderful adventure with Geauga Park District began about five years ago. Out of the blue one day, I had a prompting to buy a kayak, and three days later, I had one strapped to my car. Little did I know, although the Lord did, that it was exactly what I needed to help physically heal some old post-surgery issues, and I found that I absolutely loved kayaking! Mix that with my love for being in the woods and some quiet time alone, and that's how my love affair with Campsite G at Headwaters Park began.

It doesn't take much to make a perfectly wonderful day there. I pack a wicker picnic basket, my little campfire coffee pot, grab some firewood (wrapped tight in a garbage bag – I don't do spiders) and head to the campsite. I love to get there early while the mist is still on the water. It only takes a few minutes to get a fire started. First item of business is to get a pot of coffee going. I have an old, blackened campfire percolator. My dad always had it in the car to make a pot of coffee for my mother on their hikes. You can imagine how much I enjoy coffee from that pot! I put my red checkered tablecloth on the picnic table and a mason jar with a couple of whatever flowers I had in the garden, unfold my

camp chair, and then I just seem to settle...deeply. It is so simple and yet so satisfying – such a feeling of contentment. After those few things are set up, I will put the kayak in. Nothing is quite like the feeling of getting in and slipping into the water. Quite often when I am there it is early morning and it is just me and the birds. I paddle up to a little cove I always head for first. On the way up, I look for the Bald Eagle or the Osprey. If it is earlier in the year, there will be water lilies to paddle through. In June, wild roses along the lake shore. In the fall, the colors will reflect on the edges of the lake. When I get to the little cove I love, there is one particularly beautifully shaped tree that drapes

over the edge of the water. I love watching it change over the seasons. There is a Kingfisher who lives in the cove. I look for him, too, each spring. It is probably not the same one, more likely the next generation, but I smile as soon as I see him again. I laugh because I am pretty sure that what I consider his “hello again”

is probably him letting me have it for paddling into his cove! Either way, he delights me.

The time in the kayak is precious thinking and listening time...time to pray, time to savor, time to just be.

After a good paddle up and back, I'll head back to the campsite. I cook up a couple of eggs to perfection in my trusty cast iron skillet; it is well seasoned and it never sticks – I love it! Some turkey bacon and toast go right on the grate over the fire. Campfires make the best toast! I get the butter and preserves out of my basket and pour that first cup of coffee. Then I just sit down by the fire and be very, very thankful.

And that is the start of a very good day at Campsite G! 🍃

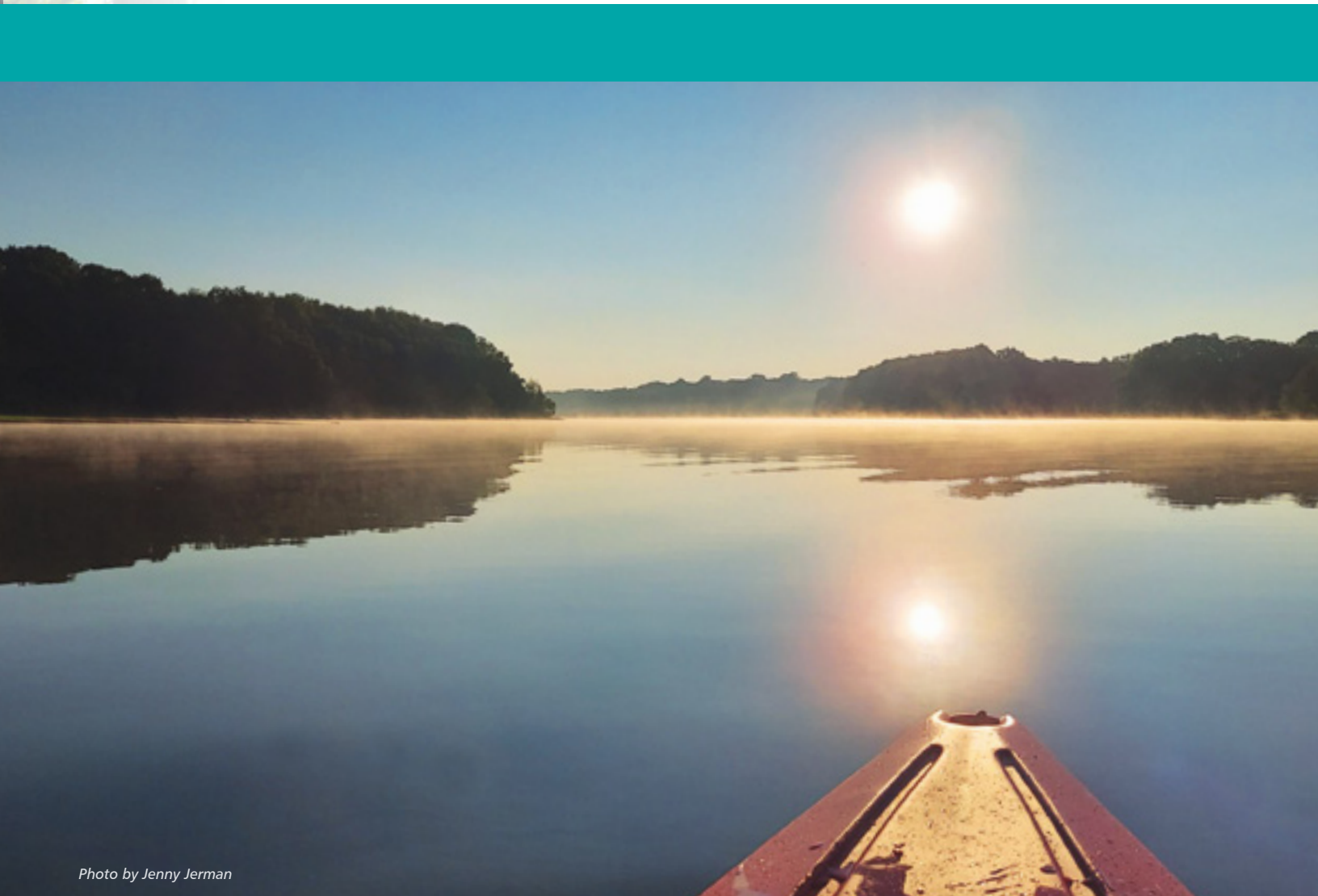


Photo by Jenny Jerman

Totality Awesome!



Photo by Sonny Williams



Most of us have now experienced a total solar eclipse for the first and only time in our lives, an absolutely unforgettable experience, and Geauga Park District had the honor of being part of that memory for about 3,200 people! Aside from those who simply visited a nearby park to appreciate the natural phenomenon on their own, the Geauga County Fairgrounds gave eclipse-viewers plenty of space to spread out, and also allowed our staff and volunteers to provide a wide range of educational fun and 11 food trucks for both residents and visitors, some from as far away as Washington DC, Illinois, and even California!



Indeed, the camaraderie we all felt was palpable. Though the morning started a bit cloudy and chilly, Nature did us all a favor by clearing up the sky and warming up the air for optimal viewing at totality. Thanks to all our dedicated volunteers who helped us deliver some great hands-on activities on the ground while Mother Nature took care of the rest!



We couldn't have provided our fairgrounds event without the generosity of these sponsors. Thank you!



Foundation for Geauga Parks



Let This Be Your Reminder

Registration is always required for programs with fees or limited attendance, but fewer programs now require registration in advance. **Please mark your calendars or set an alarm to attend non-registration programs, as reminder emails cannot be sent for them.**

JULY

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

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors

1 Geauga Skywatchers

Monday, July 1, 6:30–7:30 PM
Burton Public Library

An astronomy themed program; topic to be determined. Designed for grades 6-12, but anyone can join. **Registration required** through Geauga County Public Library. Please go to their website to register. ♿

2 Early Morning Hike

Tuesday, July 2, 8–9 AM, Welton's Gorge
Join us for an early-morning, up-paced hike through the field and forest of this beautiful park. Held rain or shine, so dress for the weather.

6 Pond Exploration

Saturday, July 6, 10:30–11:30 AM
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove

We'll supply the nets; you supply the curiosity! Learn about pond habitat, then scoop a net in the pond to discover animal life under the water.

6 Family Stream Adventure

Saturday, July 6, 1–3 PM
Swine Creek Reservation

Venture into a forested stream to discover wildlife such as crayfish, salamanders and crane fly larva. Outdoor family program even in light rain. Dress accordingly and wear shoes or boots for wading in a rocky stream; no sandals, please. Follow park signs toward Swine Creek Lodge and park in areas indicated. **Registration required.**

6 Accessible Nature Cart Tours

Saturday, July 6, 1–2 PM & 2–3 PM
Veterans Legacy Woods

Cart tours enable people with limited mobility to enjoy our beautiful parks. Along the way, we'll make stops to talk about interesting natural and cultural features. All participants must be able to enter and exit a six-seat golf cart. We ask that participants limit registration to themselves and one guest. **Registration required.**

6 Movie Night: "Guardians of the Galaxy"

Saturday, July 6, 8:30–11:30 PM
Observatory Park

Join us for this outdoor screening of Guardians of the Galaxy at this International Dark Sky Park! Bring your own blankets, lawn chairs and refreshments. Pre-show activities begin at 8:30 and movie at dusk, approximately 9:30. Movie shown indoors if inclement weather. (Rated PG-13)



7 Breeding Birds Van Trip

Sunday, July 7, 8 AM–4 PM
The Rookery

Travel with us by park van to Cuyahoga Valley National Park and surrounding natural areas seeking hard-to-find warblers, sparrows and vireos plus our more familiar breeding birds. Bring sack lunch and binoculars and dress for the weather. Adults only, please. **Registration required.**

7 Bass Lake Kayak

Sunday, July 7, 10 AM–Noon
Bass Lake Preserve

Spend a morning on the tranquil waters of Bass Lake enjoying the wildlife and beautiful surroundings. Basic kayaking skills required; instruction not given. Rain or shine, except for thunderstorms. Bring drinking water and wear shoes that can get wet or muddy. **Registration required** beginning June 30 at 10 AM.

7 Thompson Ledges Backcountry Hike

Sunday, July 7, 12:30–2:30 PM
Thompson Ledges Township Park
(Thompson Road, just east of the Thompson town square on Rt. 528)

Explore off trail the unimproved northern portion of Thompson Ledges Park featuring oak and hemlock forests and unique plant and bird life. Must be capable of hiking several miles of muddy, rocky terrain with some steep slopes. Wear sturdy footwear that can get wet and provide good traction. Ages 10+; no younger children, please. Child must be accompanied by an adult. **Registration required.**

7 Thompson Ledges Hike

Sunday, July 7, 3–4:30 PM
Thompson Ledges Township Park
(Thompson Road, just east of the Thompson town square on Rt. 528)

Explore the developed part of Thompson Ledges Park south of Thompson Road featuring oak and hemlock forests and unique plant and bird life. Must be capable of hiking several miles of muddy, rocky terrain with some steep slopes. Wear sturdy footwear that can get wet and provide good traction. Meet at picnic shelter. Ages 10+; no younger children, please. Child must be accompanied by an adult. **Registration required.**

Photo by Tom Elesh Jr.



8 Woodland Hike

Monday, July 8, 9–10:30 AM
Claridon Woodlands

Take a morning walk in the cool shade of the woods. We'll listen for birds, look at trees and plants, and maybe also find a few surprises along the way.

10 Habitat Hike

Wednesday, July 10, 10–11:30 AM
Sunnybrook Preserve

Join a naturalist for a late morning walk to explore this beautiful park of many habitats!

11 Union Chapel Bat Count

Thursday, July 11, 8:30–9:30 PM
Newbury Union Chapel on State Route 44
Union Chapel is home to Geauga Park District's "Bat Condo," a nursery roost for big and little brown bats and their offspring. Help a naturalist with our annual bat survey by counting bats as they exit their daytime roost and head out for evening feeding. We will use click counters to keep track of their numbers as they exit. Directions will be sent before program. **Registration required.**

13 Hound Hike

Saturday, July 13, 8–9 AM
Welton's Gorge

Dogs and their humans, join us for a trail hike of over two miles. Cold Nose Companions Dog Training will also share tips and tricks to practice during the hike. Bring dog towels, water, a water bowl, poop scoop and bags for dog clean-up. Only 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.

13 Astrotots XL: Ready for Launch!

(Ages 6-11 w/adult)
Saturday, July 13, 9:30–10:45 AM & 1–2:15 PM, Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center
Learn the basics of rocket science, craft a way-cool (but going nowhere) rocket, and assist in the launch of a level 1 model rocket. Guaranteed to be a blast! Register only ages 6-11. **Registration required.** ♿

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors


13 Welton's Gorge Backcountry Gorge Exploration

Saturday, July 13, 9:30 AM–Noon
Welton's Gorge

Take a strenuous, off-trail hike into a rocky woodland ravine with deep rock ledges, cool streams, salamanders and other stream life. Must be capable of hiking unassisted over rugged terrain including slippery rocks, downed trees, steep slopes and stream crossings. Held rain or shine, so dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes with good traction even in wet conditions. Bring walking stick or one will be provided. Long pants recommended. **Registration required.**

13 Nights Out in the Parks: Bent String Band

Saturday, July 13, 7–8:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Amphitheater

Enjoy a mix of early American roots music performed by the Bent String Band, including early jazz, acoustic blues and originals...all with the feel of jazz-age swing! Held in the Cherry Room if inclement weather. 

14 Polliwog Paddle Family Canoe (Ages 5+ w/adult)


Sunday, July 14, 1–3 PM
Eldon Russell Park, Horwath's Shelter

Take an easy-paced, short-distance float on the wildlife-rich Upper Cuyahoga River. Bring a water bottle, sunscreen and a change of clothes in case of capsizement. All children must be accompanied by an adult. **Registration required** by phone beginning July 7 at 10 AM.




14 Nature Journaling: Beetles

Sunday, July 14, 1–3:30 PM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge

Fee: \$20 Geauga residents, \$24 out-of-county
Attend this monthly series to learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. This month our inspiration will be the amazing world of beetles. Partially outdoors. Taking photos is optional. First-time participants must pay \$20 for Geauga residents or \$24 for out-of-county residents to purchase a new journal, pen and other supplies. Those who attended the series before, but not within the calendar year, must pay \$10 for Geauga residents or \$12 for out-of-county residents to cover additional instruction and supplies. Those who already registered within the calendar year are free. **Registration required** by phone only. 

15 Drop-in Nature Craft: Pebble Art

Monday, July 15, 2:30–4 PM & 6:30–8 PM, Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
Drop in during program hours to create a piece of art using pebbles while supplies last. Children must be accompanied by an adult. No registration required. 

15 Nature at Night Bike Ride

Monday, July 15, 8–10 PM
Headwaters Park, Bike Trail Parking Lot
Bring your bike and take a leisurely six-mile-round-trip evening bike ride to discover singing birds, flickering fireflies, flying bats and other wildlife that presents itself as darkness descends. Our electronic bat detector will amplify the echo-location signals sent out by bats as they hunt insects, and our thermal imaging scope can discover unseen wildlife in the darkness. Bring a bike or helmet light since we will be riding after sunset. Cancelled by heavy rain/storms; check website for program status.

16 Family Stream Adventure

Tuesday, July 16, 1–3 PM
The West Woods, Affelder House
Venture into a forested stream to discover wildlife such as crayfish, salamanders and crane fly larva. Outdoor family program even in light rain. Dress accordingly and wear shoes or boots for wading in a rocky stream; no sandals, please. **Registration required.**

18 Elderberries: Peddling & Paddling in the Park

Thursday, July 18, 9 AM–Noon
Headwaters Park, Boathouse
Seniors, enjoy a morning of kayaking, hiking and a hands-on Nature activity! Ohman Family Living at Briar will also provide a light breakfast. In collaboration with the Department on Aging and UH Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.**


20 Interurban History Hike

Saturday, July 20, 9–11 AM, The Rookery
Learn the fascinating history of the Interurban Railroad as we hike along the old railroad bed on-trail approximately 2.5 miles over level terrain. Held rain or shine, dress accordingly. Cancelled by heavy rain/storms; check website for program status.


20 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, July 20, 8–11 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 permitted inside building at a time; may result in a wait to enter. Cancelled if cloudy; check our website or social media for notice.


21 Dragon Hunting

Sunday, July 21, 1:30–3:30 PM
Beartown Lakes Reservation, Minnow Pond
Explore the wetland habitats at Beartown Lakes to discover what dragonflies inhabit the area, learn about these amazing insects as you observe their interesting behaviors, and try your hand at catching some! Nets provided; bring your own binoculars, camera, sunscreen and water. Wear sturdy walking shoes (no flip-flops) in case we venture off-trail. 


21 Full Moon Hike: The Green Corn Moon

Sunday, July 21, 9:30–10:30 PM
Observatory Park
Take a naturalist-led hike of 1.5 miles over level terrain at a gentle pace to look for fireflies and experience Nature at night, then observe the rising full moon using park telescopes, weather permitting. 

23 Toddler Time: Sensing the Summer (Ages 1-2 w/adult)

Tuesday, July 23, 9:30–10:30 AM & 11 AM–Noon, Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park
Experience Nature with your little one as we see, smell and touch summertime in the park. Strollers and carriers welcome! **Registration required** for all attending. 

23 Art Workshop: Beach Glass Art

Tuesday, July 23, 6:30–9 PM, Claridon Woodlands, Judge Lester Taylor Lodge
Fee: \$45 Geauga residents, \$50 out-of-county
Join beach glass artist Sue Luck to create a themed piece of artwork from Lake Erie beach glass. Sue will also share her journey in becoming a beach glass enthusiast, collecting glass from beaches across Northeast Ohio. All supplies provided. Aged 18+. **Registration required.** 

24 Bicycling Basics for Adults

Wednesday, July 24, 6:30–7:30 PM
Mountain Run Station, Chardon Rotary Shelter
Whether you're new to bicycling or returning to it after a few years, we'll help you get started. Drop by to get your key measurements, be fitted for a helmet, and take our "balance bike" for a spin. If you have a bike, feel free to bring it along, but we'll also have several bikes for you to try out! **Registration required.**

24 Teen Cuyahoga Kayak Challenge (Teens entering grades 8-10)

Wednesday, July 24, 9 AM–3 PM
Eldon Russell Park, Horwath's Landing
The wilds of the Upper Cuyahoga River are home to a wondrous variety of birds and beasts. Teens, join a naturalist on this adventure as we paddle our way, discovering plants and wildlife in and along the river. Bring lunch and water bottle in a waterproof bag, as well as sunscreen, insect repellent, and your completed waiver. **Registration required.**

24 Grandparents in the Park Summer Picnic

Wednesday, July 24, 11:30AM–1:30 PM
Holbrook Hollows
Grandparents and grandchildren enjoy a day in the park together with a picnic and fun activities for all ages. In collaboration with the Department on Aging. Food and beverages provided. **Registration required** for all attending.

25 Drop-in Nature Craft: Nature Prints

Thursday, July 25, 2:30–4 PM & 6:30–8 PM, Claridon Woodlands, Judge Lester Taylor Lodge
Drop in during program hours to create a Nature print wall hanging, while supplies last, and learn fun Nature facts. This craft uses acrylic paints, so dress for a mess. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

25 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, July 25, 7–9 PM
Veterans Legacy Woods, Freedom Hall
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. No registration required.

27 Geauga Gems Trekking Series Hike

Saturday, July 27, 9–10:30 AM
Holbrook Hollows
Enjoy a morning hike! Must have the ability to hike at least 2 miles with several fairly steep hills. Rain or shine, so dress accordingly and bring water.

RECURRING PROGRAMS

2 9 16 23 30 Geauga Cyclists

Tuesdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 9–10:30 AM, Chardon Bike Trailhead, 312 Park Avenue
Seniors enjoy the company of other bike riders on this easy ride along The Maple Highlands Trail. Bring your own bike and water and wear a helmet for safety. Park at the Chardon Bike Trailhead. The trail is flat and ride is approximately 1½ hours long. Rides held every Tuesday May to October in coordination with Geauga Department on Aging, University Hospitals Geauga Medical Campus and the City of Chardon. For details call Melissa Wheeler at the Department on Aging, 440-279-2167.

2 16 30 Geauga Walkers

Tuesdays, 1–2:30 PM
July 2, Whitlam Woods
July 16, Russell Uplands Preserve
July 30, Chickagami Park
Hikes for active seniors of 2 miles. Naturalist led. Moderate hilly terrain. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2167.

28 Important Bird Area Walk

Sunday, July 28, 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, and a fun way to learn more bird identification tips firsthand. IBA walks are free and open to all. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. For more info, visit www.blackbrookaudubon.org.

28 Stream Hike

Sunday, July 28, 1–2:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Valley
Salamanders, minnows, crayfish – there’s so much life to discover in our streams, and of course getting in the water helps beat the summer heat! Wear close-toed creek-walking shoes. We’ll provide the nets and hike down to the stream. Ages 7+; no younger children, please. Child must be accompanied by an adult.

28 Paracord Keychain

Sunday, July 28, 1–2 PM & 2–3 PM
Big Creek Park, Cherry Room
Fee: \$8 Geauga residents, \$10 out-of-county
Choose two awesome paracord colors and learn how to braid the double helix DNA keychain pattern. Cobra knot will be used to make a 4-inch-long keychain, ring included. **Registration required.**

12 26 Make A Sundial

Friday, July 12, 7–8 PM, Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center
Friday, July 26, 7–8 PM (Virtual)
Learn the science and art behind making sundials, and take home your own! Followed by night sky viewing, weather permitting. July 26 is a virtual program. We will send you a link a few days before the program. **Registration required** for virtual program only.

12 13 Astrotots: 3-2-1 Blast-off! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Friday, July 12, 9:30–10:30 AM, 11 AM–Noon & 1–2 PM,
Saturday, July 13, 11:30 AM–12:30 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center
Come SEE a rocket. Come BE a rocket. Come put together a rocket fueled by your own imagination! Come admire Commander Melvin’s rocket collection and help us do the final countdown for a real, onsite air-powered rocket launch. Register only ages 3-5. **Registration required.**

12 13 26 27 Night Sky Viewing

Fridays & Saturdays, July 12, 13, 26 & 27, 9–11 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.

28 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, July 28, 2–2:45 PM & 3–3:45 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center
Enjoy a planetarium presentation about what to watch for in the night sky this week. No registration required.

30 Monarch Egg-Collecting Hike

Tuesday, July 30, 10 AM–Noon & 1:30–3:30 PM, Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
Hike up to two miles with a naturalist, mostly on-trail but some off-trail, to help collect Monarch eggs from milkweed plants, which will be reared and displayed as adult butterflies at The Great Geauga County Fair. Hike is on rolling terrain, held rain or shine. Note park rules forbidding harvesting eggs and caterpillars for personal use. Long pants recommended. **Registration required.**



19 20 Timbertots: Bees & Blossoms (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Friday, July 19, 10–11 AM & 1–2 PM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
Saturday, July 20, 10–11 AM & 1–2 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge
Explore the amazing lives of bees and other animals that help flowers bloom with fun activities! **Registration required** for all attending.

20 26 Basic Learn to Kayak (Ages 10+ w/adult)

Saturday, July 20, 8–10 AM and
Friday, July 26, 6:30–8:30 PM
Headwaters Park, Boathouse
Learn basic kayak-handling techniques for safe kayaking on flat water. Wear shoes that can get wet or muddy and bring water and a change of clothes in case of capsiz. Ages 10+; no younger children, please. Child must be accompanied by an adult. No private kayaks or unregistered people. **Registration required** beginning July 13 at 10 AM.

28 29 Weave a Waste Basket

Sunday, July 28, Noon–6 PM &
Monday, July 29, 9 AM–3:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
Fee: \$35 Geauga resident, \$40 out-of-county
Skill level: intermediate. Build on your basket-weaving skills while we weave a waste basket with design details. Due to preparation expenses, a refund may not be processed if cancellation occurs within five days of the program. **Registration required.**

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors

2 Family Stream Adventure

Friday, August 2, 1-3 PM
The West Woods, Affelder House
Venture into a forested stream to discover wildlife such as crayfish, salamanders and crane fly larva. Held even in light rain, so dress accordingly and wear shoes or boots for wading in a rocky stream; no sandals, please. **Registration required.**



3 Prairie Blooms Hike

Saturday, August 3, 1-2:30 PM
Observatory Park
Take an easy hike to view and identify prairie flowers and grasses at their peak bloom.

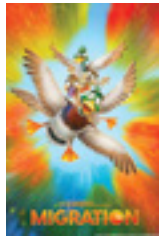
3 Family Bingo in the Park

Saturday, August 3, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
BINGO! Join us anytime during program hours for some classic fun as we play bingo with Nature-themed prizes! Fun for all ages, then stay for the evening movie night under the stars. Held in the McCullough Science center if inclement weather.

3 Movie Night: "Migration"

Saturday, August 3, 8:30-11:30 PM
Observatory Park

Head this way for the hit animated feature *Migration*! Bring your own blankets, lawn chairs and refreshments. Pre-show activities begins at 8:30 and movie at dusk, approximately 9. Movie shown indoors if inclement weather. (Rated PG)



4 Grand River Extreme Kayak for Adults

Sunday, August 4, 9 AM-4:30 PM
Grand River Conservation Campus, Ashtabula County
Endeavor this strenuous day-long paddle for experienced kayakers! Explore the wilds of the Grand River with a wonderful variety of birds, dragonflies, reptiles and other critters. Bring lunch, snacks and a water bottle in a waterproof bag, sunscreen and insect repellent if needed. Previous kayak experience needed; park kayaks provided. Adults only, please. **Registration required** beginning July 28 at 10 AM.

4 Accessible Nature Cart Tours

Sunday, August 4, 1-2 PM & 2-3 PM
Frohning Meadows
Our cart tours enable people with limited mobility to enjoy our beautiful parks. Along the way, we'll make stops to talk about interesting natural and cultural features. All participants must be able to enter and exit a six-seat golf cart. We ask that participants limit registration to themselves and one guest. **Registration required.**

4 Nature Journaling: Fabulous Fungi

Sunday, August 4, 1-3:30 PM
Sunnybrook Preserve, Lodge
Fee: \$20 Geauga residents, \$24 out-of-county
Attend this monthly series to learn basic journaling techniques to record your Nature observations. This month our inspiration will be fabulous fungi. Partially outdoors. Taking photos is optional. First-time participants must pay \$20 for Geauga residents or \$24 for out-of-county residents to purchase a new journal, pen and other supplies. Those who attended the series before, but not within the calendar year, must pay \$10 for Geauga residents or \$12 for out-of-county residents to cover additional instruction and supplies. Those who already registered within the calendar year are free. **Registration required** by phone only.

5 Geauga Skywatchers: The Summer Triangle

Monday, August 5, 6:30-7:30 PM
Bainbridge Library
One patch of the sky, the Summer Triangle, contains a huge collection of amazing sights! From the Milky Way, to black holes, to exoplanets, this easy-to-find region has a lot to offer. We'll explore this patch of the summer sky and learn how to take in some of its best features. Designed for grades 6-12, but anyone can join. **Registration required** through Geauga County Public Library. Please go to their website to register. ♿

10 Polliwog Paddle Family Canoe

(Ages 5+ w/adult)
Saturday, August 10, 10 AM-Noon
Eldon Russell Park, Horwath's Shelter
Take an easy-paced, short-distance float on the wildlife-rich Upper Cuyahoga River. Bring water bottle, sunscreen and change of clothes in case of capsiz. All children must be accompanied by an adult. **Registration required** by phone beginning August 3 at 10 AM.

10 Celebrating National S'more Day

Saturday, August 10, 6:30-9 PM
Claridon Woodlands
Roast a marshmallow and build a delicious s'more to celebrate National S'more Day, plus learn a bit of s'more history and how this campfire treat became so popular. **Registration required** for all attending. ♿

11 Lake Kelso Kayak

(Ages 10+ w/adult) Saturday, August 11, 10:30 AM-Noon, Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve, Lake Kelso
Paddle the tranquil waters of Lake Kelso, enjoying the wildlife and beautiful surroundings. Basic kayaking skills required as instruction is not given. All equipment provided. Ages 10+; no younger children, please. Child must be accompanied by an adult. No private boats. Held rain or shine, except in thunderstorm. **Registration required** beginning August 4 at 10 AM.



11 Moths & Meteors Overnight Event

Sunday, August 11, 9 PM through Monday, August 12, 6 AM, Observatory Park, Grounds
Register to 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! NOTE: Only those showing receipt of registration will be permitted entry. Best meteor viewing 1-3 AM. Naturalist on site from sunset to sunrise. Camping in tents only. Set up Sunday after 4 PM; must remove Monday by 9 AM. No campers, trailers, generators, alcohol, grills or open fires. Pets must be leashed at all times. Cancelled in case of inclement weather. **Registration required** for all attendees, up to six people per registration.

13 Toddler Time: Sensing the Summer

(Ages 1-2 w/adult)
Tuesday, August 13, 9:30-10:30 AM & 11 AM-Noon, The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
Enjoy experiencing Nature with your little one as we see, smell and touch summertime in the park. Strollers and carriers welcome! **Registration required** for all attending. ♿

15 Elderberries: Breakfast & Yoga

Thursday, August 15, 9 AM-Noon
Veterans Legacy Woods, Freedom Hall
Seniors, join us for breakfast, yoga and a craft at this beautiful park. Breakfast will be provided by Burton Healthcare. In a collaboration with the Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.**

17 Nature Break: Women's Retreat

Saturday, August 17, 8:30 AM-1 PM
Bass Lake Preserve, Lodge
Fee: \$8 Geauga residents, \$10 out-of-county
Take a break and relax with yoga, kayaking and a Nature-related lesson and activity. Continental breakfast and lunch provided. Bring mat or beach towel; dress in layers. **Registration required.**

17 Nights Out in the Parks: The Hot Jazz 7

Saturday, August 17, 7–8:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Amphitheater

The Hot Jazz 7 plays furiously fun music in the New Orleans Ensemble Jazz style of the roaring 20s. Join us for an evening of great classic jazz! Held inside if inclement weather. ♿

17 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, August 17, 8–11 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. ♿

18 Nature Explorers: Bass Lake Canoe (Ages 6-11 w/adult)

Sunday, August 18, 2–5 PM
Bass Lake Preserve

Nature Explorers ages 6-11 and at least one adult, preferably with some canoe experience, join naturalists for a paddle exploring Bass Lake in search of wildlife plants and other Nature. Canoes and life jackets provided; bring sunscreen, bug spray and a water bottle, and wear shoes that can get wet. Registration required by phone beginning August 4 at 10 AM.

18 Campfire Cooking: Open Pit

Sunday, August 18, 4:30–6:30 PM & 6:30–8:30 PM, Chickagami Park

Learn tips and tricks for campfire cooking. Bring any fixings you want for a campfire meal, such as ham and cheese or gourmet pizza, and the park will provide the fire, pie irons, roasting forks, and foil, as well as plates, utensils and water. You may also bring your own camp cooking gear to try out. Children must be accompanied by adult. Registration required.

19 Full Moon Hike: The Sturgeon Moon

Monday, August 19, 9–10 PM
Observatory Park

Take a naturalist-led hike of 1.5-miles over level terrain at a gentle pace to learn about the amazing lake sturgeon and experience Nature at night, then observe the rising full moon and the night sky using park telescopes, weather permitting. ♿

21 Nature Exploration River Kayak for Adults

Wednesday, August 21, 6:30–8 PM
Eldon Russell Park, Horwath's Landing

Discover an amazing diversity of plants and animals during this leisurely evening kayak. Previous kayaking experience and ability to paddle upstream required, as instruction is not given. Registration required beginning August 14 at 10 AM.

22 Homeschool Days: Family Learning Fair!

Thursday, August 22,
10:30 AM–12:30 PM & 1:30–3:30 PM
Veterans Legacy Woods, Freedom Hall

Register and drop in anytime during program hours to participate in fun activities and gather information from Geauga County organizations that offer educational opportunities for homeschool students. Students will get a "Learning Fair Passport" to check off all the participating organizations they visit, and completed passports earn a raffle ticket to win cool prizes! Follow us on social media for updates on participating organizations as they become available. Indoors and outdoors, so dress for the weather. Allow an hour or more to participate. Registration required for all attending. ♿

22 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, August 22, 7–9 PM
Veterans Legacy Woods, Freedom Hall

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. ♿

24 Hound Hike

Saturday, August 24, 8–9 AM
Claridon Woodlands

Dogs and their humans, take an easy two-mile hike. Cold Nose Companions Dog Training will also share some tips and tricks to practice during the hike. Bring dog towels, water, a water bowl, poop scoop and bags for dog clean-up. Only 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.

24 Geauga Gems Trek for Adults

Saturday, August 24, 9–11:30 AM
Big Creek Park, Tupelo Pond (entrance off Ravenna Road)

Explore the 2.1-mile Creek Trail on this moderately strenuous hike over hilly terrain with possible muddy conditions. This gem of a trail traverses some beautiful habitat. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy foot gear. Adults only, please. Note Tupelo entrance, not main Big Creek Park entrance. Registration required.

24 Scout Day: A Bear Goes Fishing

Saturday, August 24, 10–11:30 AM
Claridon Woodlands

Bear Cub Scouts, join us for this elective adventure as we learn all about fishing! All supplies provided. Dress for the weather. Registration required for scouts only, but adult leaders must attend.

24 Trail Horse Nature Challenge

Saturday, August 24, 10 AM–3 PM
Swine Creek Reservation

Sign up to challenge yourself and your horse on a 1- to 2-hour challenge course with natural trail obstacles and Nature questions along the trails. Awards and certificates given in youth and adult divisions. Helmets recommended. Trailer your horse to the Woods Edge Shelter parking lot. Participants will be assigned departure times 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. Bring a shovel to clean up after your horse in the parking lot. Registration required.

24 Scout Day: Cadette & Senior Kayak

Saturday, August 24, 2–4 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve

Cadette and Senior Scouts ages 11-16 with an adult leader, spend the afternoon on the tranquil waters of Lake Kelso, enjoying the wildlife and beautiful surroundings. Life vests provided. Held rain or shine, except in event of thunderstorm. Wear shoes to get wet or muddy, and bring a water bottle, sunscreen and change of clothes in case of capsiz. No private boats. Registration required for all attending, including adults.

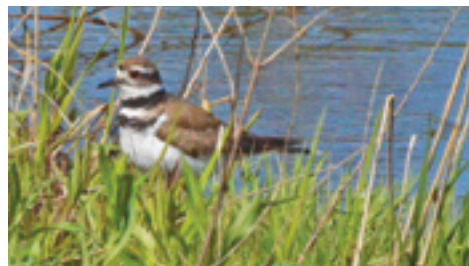


Photo by Jim Marquardt

25 Important Bird Area Walk

Sunday, August 25, 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, and 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. ♿

25 Buckeye Trail Highlight Hike

Sunday, August 25, 1–3:30 PM
Orchard Hill Park

The Buckeye Trail winds nearly 1,444 miles around Ohio. Without hiking the entire trail, let's visit one of the eight Geauga Park District parks that can access the Blue Blazes. Participants should have the ability to hike around 2-4+ miles. Held rain or shine, so dress accordingly and bring water. Registration required.

AUGUST

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

Adventure/Discovery Arts Astronomy Kids Seniors

25 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, August 25, 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. ♿

27 The Bird Tornado Strikes Again!

Tuesday, August 27, 7:15–8:30 PM
Burton Square Gazebo

Witness a cyclone of hundreds of Chimney Swifts swirling, then plummeting into an old chimney used as a migratory motel on their journey to South America. Bring a chair and sit in the parking lot for an unforgettable spectacle! **Registration required.** ♿

29 Early Morning Hike

Thursday, August 29, 8–9:30 AM
The West Woods, Affelder House

Join us for an early morning up-paced hike on the Affelder Link trail with hilly terrain. Held rain or shine, so dress for the weather.

RECURRING PROGRAMS

1 5 Drop-in Nature Craft

Thursday, August 1, 2:30–4 PM & 6:30–8 PM, Veterans Legacy Woods, Club
Monday, August 5, 2:30–4 PM & 6:30–8 PM, The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge

Drop in during program hours to create art from Nature, while supplies last, and learn fun Nature facts. This craft may use acrylic paints, so dress for a mess. Children must be accompanied by an adult. ♿

4 17 Welton's Gorge Backcountry Gorge Exploration

Sunday, August 4, 9–11:30 AM
Saturday, August 17, 9:30 AM–Noon
Welton's Gorge

A strenuous off-trail hike into a rocky woodland ravine with deep rock ledges, cool streams, salamanders and other stream life. Must be capable of hiking unassisted over rugged terrain including slippery rocks, downed trees, steep slopes and stream crossings. Held rain or shine, so dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes with good traction even in wet conditions. Bring a walking stick or one will be provided. Long pants recommended. **Registration required.**

6 13 20 27 Gauga Cyclists

Tuesdays, August 6, 13, 20, 27,
9–10:30 AM, Chardon Bike Trailhead,
312 Park Avenue

Seniors enjoy the company of other bike riders on this easy ride along The Maple Highlands Trail. Bring your own bike and water and wear a helmet for safety. Park at the Chardon Bike Trailhead. The trail is flat, approximately 1½ hours long. Rides held every Tuesday, May to October, in coordination with Geauga Department on Aging, University Hospitals Geauga Medical Campus and the City of Chardon. For details call Melissa Wheeler at the Department on Aging, 440-279-2167.

9 11 Timbertots: Camp Day

(Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Friday, August 9, 10–11 AM & 1–2 PM
Big Creek Park, Maple Grove

Sunday, August 11, 1–2 PM & 3–4 PM
Chickagami Park, Overlook Shelter
Preschool version of big kid camp with activities, crafts and s'more! Held outdoors, so dress accordingly. **Registration required** for all attending.

9 23 The Summer Triangle

Friday, August 9, 7–8 PM, Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center ♿
Friday, August 23, 7–8 PM (Virtual) ♿

Explore this fascinating portion of the night sky including double stars, black holes, the Milky Way, exoplanets and more! Followed by night sky viewing, weather permitting. August 23 is a virtual program. We will send you a link a few days before the program. **Registration required** for virtual program only.

9 10 23 24 Night Sky Viewing

Fridays & Saturdays, August 9, 10, 23 & 24
9–11 PM, Observatory Park

If skies are clear, observe the night sky through the Oberle telescope and other telescopes spaced out around the plaza. No registration required. Planetarium presentation if cloudy. ♿ ♿

13 27 Gauga Walkers

Tuesdays, 1–2:30 PM
August 13, Welton's Gorge
August 27, Holbrook Hollows, Franklin Marsh

Hike for active seniors of 2 miles. Naturalist led. Moderate hilly terrain. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2167.

29 30 31 The Great Gauga County Fair

Thursday, Friday & Saturday
August 29, 30 & 31, 11 AM–7 PM
(also September 1 & 2), Geauga County Fairgrounds, Natural Resources Area
Visit our building to see the Top Ten Trail contest winners, meet Monarch Butterflies and see what's new! Daily live Monarch program and taggings at 3 PM if butterflies are available. ♿

SEPTEMBER

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

5 The Bird Tornado Strikes Again!

Thursday, September 5, 7–8:30 PM
Burton Square Gazebo

Witness a cyclone of hundreds of Chimney Swifts swirling, then plummeting into an old chimney used as a migratory motel on their journey to South America. Bring a chair and sit in the parking lot for an unforgettable spectacle! **Registration required.** ♿

6 Chagrin River Bird Quest Birding Challenge

Friday, September 6, 4–6 PM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge

Calling all bird enthusiasts: a 24-hour birding marathon awaits you! The Chagrin River Bird Quest Birding Challenge takes place Friday to Saturday. Assemble a team and get yourselves registered by going to the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland website www.clevelandaudubon.org and clicking on the Bird Quest button. Then come here for team check-in and final registration, where you can also pick up maps, checklists and T-shirts and talk strategy with teammates and naturalists. All materials and activities are free. **Registration required** through Audubon of Greater Cleveland.



Photo by Jim Marquardt

6 Evening Adventure Walk

Friday, September 6, 7:30–9 PM, Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve, Sunset Shelter

Enjoy a late summer night exploring the sights and sounds of meadow, pond and forest edge. We will hike along paved trails at sunset until dark. Dress for the weather with proper footwear.

7 Chagrin River Bird Quest Celebration

Saturday, September 7, 4–7:30 PM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
For those that participated in the 24-hour Chagrin River Bird Quest, the event ends with this celebration! Turn in your bird checklists for judging, then enjoy hearty refreshments, awards and door prizes. Details at www.clevelandaububon.org.

8 Nature Journaling: Seed Dispersal

Sunday, September 8, 1–3:30 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center

*Fee: \$20 Geauga residents, \$24 out-of-county. Attend this monthly series to learn techniques to record your Nature observations. This month our inspiration will be seeds and how they travel. Partially outdoors. Taking photos is optional. First-time participants must pay \$20 for Geauga residents or \$24 for out-of-county residents to purchase a new journal, pen and other supplies. Those who attended the series before, but not within the calendar year, must pay \$10 for Geauga residents or \$12 for out-of-county residents to cover additional instruction and supplies. Those registered within the calendar year are free. **Registration required** by phone only.*

8 Nature Trek Fitness Hike

Sunday, September 8, 1–3 PM
Headwaters Park, Crystal Lake Picnic Area
Let's move it, people! Burn those calories on this hike, learning cool Nature facts along the way. Must be able to hike at least 4.5 miles on hilly trails. Held rain or shine; dress accordingly and bring water.

8 Sunset Kayak

Sunday, September 8, 7–8:30 PM
Headwaters Park, Boathouse
*Enjoy a peaceful float on this beautiful lake. Experience the sights and sounds waiting for sunset. Must have experience. Bring snack, water, and change of clothes in case of capsiz. **Registration required** beginning September 1 at 10 AM.*

9 Geauga Skywatchers

Monday, September 9, 6:30–7:30 PM
Bainbridge Library
*An astronomy themed program; topic to be determined. Designed for grades 6-12, but anyone can join. **Registration required** through Geauga County Public Library. Please go to their website to register.*

10 Accessible Nature Cart Tours

Tuesday, September 10, 1–2 PM & 2–3 PM, Orchard Hills Park
*Cart tours enable people with limited mobility to enjoy our beautiful parks. We'll make stops to talk about interesting natural and cultural features. Participants must be able to enter and exit a six-seat golf cart. We ask that participants limit registration to themselves and one guest. **Registration required.***

14 Welton's Gorge Backcountry Gorge Exploration

Saturday, September 14, 9:30 AM–Noon, Welton's Gorge,
*Take a strenuous, off-trail hike into a rocky woodland ravine with deep rock ledges, cool streams, salamanders and other stream life. Must be able to hike 2 miles unassisted over rugged terrain including slippery rocks, downed trees, steep slopes and stream crossings. Rain or shine, so dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes with good traction even if wet conditions. Bring a walking stick or we will provide you with one. Wear long pants. **Registration required.***

14 Horseback Riders: Amish Buggy Training & Trail Ride

Saturday, September 14, 9:30 AM–1:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
*Bring your own horse to meet and experience a Amish horse and buggy, both stationary and moving, in a non-threatening way courtesy of Sara Jane Miller. Until 11 AM, learn to safely share the trail with buggies, then join a naturalist-led trail ride. Bring lunch and end your day at Woods Edge shelter at 12:30 PM. Expect hills, gravel, mud, streams, bicycles and Amish buggies. Helmets recommended. Bring a shovel to clean up after your horse in the parking lot. Ages 10+ who are able to ride only, please. **Registration required.***



15 Singing Insects Evening Concert

Sunday, September 15, 6:45–8:15 PM
Observatory Park
The late summer insect ensemble is all tuned up, but how can we learn who's singing in the dark? We'll talk about some of the musicians and learn how to distinguish their songs to hear who is singing.

17 Toddler Time: Sensing the Summer

(Ages 1-2 w/adult)
Tuesday, September 17, 9:30–10:30 AM & 11 AM–Noon,
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
*Enjoy experiencing Nature with your little one as we see, smell and touch summertime in the park. Strollers and carriers welcome! **Registration required** for all attending.*

17 Full Moon Hike: China's Moon Festival

Tuesday, September 17, 7:30–8:30 PM
Observatory Park
Naturalist-led hike of 1.5-miles over level terrain at a gentle pace to learn about China's moon-viewing festival and experience Nature at night, then observe the rising full moon and the night sky using park telescopes, weather permitting.

19 Early Morning Hike

Thursday, September 19, 8–9:30 AM
Claridon Woodlands
Join us for an early morning up-paced hike on the trails. Held rain or shine, so dress for the weather.

19 Elderberries: Astronomy Night

Thursday, September 19, 6:30–9:30 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center
*A special Elderberries Astronomy Night! We'll have two groups rotating between a planetarium show and a singing-insect identification, then finish the evening with night sky viewing, weather permitting, to peer deep into the night sky viewing planets, nebula and other celestial features. Ohman Family Living at Blossom will also provide a meal. In collaboration with the Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.***

19 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, September 19, 7–9 PM
Veterans Legacy Woods, Freedom Hall
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. Please note program is one week earlier than usual. No registration required.

20 Nature at Night Hike

Friday, September 20, 7:30–9 PM
Orchard Hills Park
Walking through a park in the dark is a unique experience. Even during the calm of early 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.

21 Scout Day: Wolf Cub Scouts "Paws on the Path Adventure"

Saturday, September 21, 9:30–11 AM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
*Wolf Cub Scouts, work on your Paws on the Path Adventure! Indoor introduction followed by an outdoor hike to observe Nature this season, so dress for the weather. **Registration required** for scouts only, but adult leaders must attend.*

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

Saturday, September 21, 1–2:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
Daisy Girl Scouts, work on your Outdoor Art Maker badge and learn how to look at Nature like an artist! Dress for the weather, as the program includes a hike and time spent outdoors. Register scouts only but adult leaders must attend. Registration required.

21 Kelso Autumn Kayak

(Ages 10+ w/adult)
Saturday, September 21, 1–3 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
Spend a fall afternoon on the tranquil waters of Lake Kelso, enjoying the wildlife and beautiful surroundings. Basic kayaking skills required, as instruction is not given. Held rain or shine, except in event of thunderstorm. Wear shoes to get wet or muddy, and bring a water bottle, sunscreen and change of clothes in case of capsizes. No private boats. Ages 10+; no younger children, please. Child must be accompanied by an adult. Registration required beginning September 14 at 10 AM.

21 Salamander Search

Saturday, September 21, 2–3:30 PM
Whitlam Woods
The cooler, wet weather of early fall sparks increased salamander activity. Let's explore the ravines, streams and forests for these creatures and other amphibians and reptiles. Wear sturdy hiking boots and dress for the weather. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

21 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS

Saturday, September 21, 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 Geauga Gems Trekking Series Hike

Sunday, September 22, 2–3:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park
Join a naturalist for a 2-mile hike over hilly and wet terrain. Held rain or shine, so dress accordingly. Bring water and wear sturdy foot gear. Ages 8+ with adult; no younger children, please. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



28 Welton's Gorge Fall Trail Hike

Saturday, September 28, 1–2:30 PM
Welton's Gorge
Hike with a naturalist along the park trails to discover the sights and sounds of autumn. Must be able to hike at least 2 miles over rolling hills. Held rain or shine, so dress for the weather. This trail hike will not go down into the gorge; rather, we'll enjoy views of the gorge from the trail above.

29 Early Autumn Canoe Float

Sunday, September 29, 1–3 PM
Bass Lake Preserve
Paddle along the peaceful shores of Bass Lake and enjoy the plants and animals that call it home. Canoeing ability/experience required of participants. rain or shine, except in the event of a thunderstorm, so dress accordingly. Ages 10+, and 12+ to paddle; no younger children, please. Child must be accompanied by an adult. Registration required by phone beginning September 22 at 10 AM.

29 Backcountry Hike: Preserved Property

Sunday, September 29, 1–4 PM
Chesterland Location
Take a strenuous off-trail early autumn hike with a spectacular view across the Chagrin Valley, discovering wildlife and exploring habitat in the Mayer Preserve while learning the importance of protected lands for ensuring biodiversity. Plan to hike over rugged terrain including hills, ravines, obstacles like logs, stream crossings and other challenges. Held rain or shine, do dress accordingly and wear sturdy shoes that can provide traction but can get wet and muddy. Directions will be sent before program. Registration required.

29 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, September 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.

1 2 The Great Geauga County Fair

Sunday, September 1, 11 AM–7 PM & Monday, September 2, 11 AM–6 PM
Gauga County Fairgrounds, Natural Resources Area
Visit our building to meet the Monarch Butterflies and see what's new with Geauga Park District! Daily live Monarch program and taggings at 3:30 PM if butterflies are available.

3 10 17 24 Geauga Cyclists

Tuesday, September 3, 10, 17, 24, 9–10:30 AM, Chardon Bike Trailhead 312 Park Avenue
Seniors enjoy the company of other bike riders on this easy ride along The Maple Highlands Trail. Bring your own bike and water and wear a helmet for safety. Park at the Chardon Bike Trailhead. The trail is flat and approximately 1½ hours long. Rides held every Tuesday May to October in coordination with Geauga Department on Aging, University Hospitals Geauga Medical Campus and the City of Chardon. For details call Melissa Wheeler at the Department on Aging, 440-279-2167.

29 Photography Tips, Tricks & Hike

Sunday, September 29, 2–4 PM
The West Woods, Affelder House
How do you take good Nature pictures? A good camera helps, but it's the person behind the lens that makes all the difference. Learn some tips and tricks to help you take better photos from a brief indoor presentation followed by a hike to practice newly learned skills. Be sure to bring a camera or cell phone! Registration required.

29 Nature Night Lecture Series: Waterfowl

Sunday, September 29, 7–8:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
As fall progresses, we see more and more waterfowl migrate to our ponds, lakes and rivers. Ducks, geese, swans, grebes, loons and more push south from Canada. Let's discuss waterfowl migration and highlight some of these species.



Photo by Jim Marquardt

RECURRING PROGRAMS

8 15 Monarchs & Meadow Insects

Sunday, September 8, 12:30–4 PM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge

Sunday, September 15, 12:30–4 PM
Frohning Meadows, Katydid Lodge

Drop in at any time during program hours to net Monarch butterflies and a variety of other insects. Nets provided or bring your own. Sun protection, socks, hat and long pants recommended. No insect collecting for removal from park. Monarchs will be tagged by our naturalists, recording the name of the person who netted it so we can contact them if that butterfly is recovered in Mexico.


10 24 Geauga Walkers


Tuesday, 1–2:30 PM


September 10, Observatory Park
September 24, Frohning Meadows

Hike for active seniors of approximately 2 miles. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule: 440-279-2167.

11 13 27 Cleveland's Astronomical History

Wednesday, September 11, 7–8 PM (Virtual) 

Friday, September 13, 7–8 PM
Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center 

Friday, September 27, 7–8 PM (Virtual) 

*Celebrate "Ohio Open Doors" week with us, learning about the fascinating history of astronomy and space-related research in the Cleveland area. From telescope-building to hidden particle detectors, we'll share some amazing historical highlights. We will send you a link to this virtual program a few days before the program. **Registration required** for virtual sessions only. September 13 session is followed by night sky viewing, weather permitting.*

13 14 Timbertots: Monarch Migration (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Friday, September 13, 10–11:30 AM & 1–2:30 PM, Orchard Hills Park, Lodge



Saturday, September 14, 10–11:30 AM & 1–2:30 PM, Observatory Park, Cygnus Shelter

*Discover the amazing lives of Monarch butterflies through fun and facts, followed by meadow searching with nets in hand! Dress for the weather. **Registration required** for all attending.*

13 14 27 28 Night Sky Viewing


Fridays, September 13 & 27, 8–11 PM
Saturdays, September 14 & 28, 7–11 PM

Observatory Park, Robert McCullough Science Center

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

27 28 Odds & Ends Baskets

Friday, September 27, 9 AM–2:30 PM
Saturday, September 28, 9 AM–2:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center

*Fee: \$20 Geauga residents, \$24 out-of-county. Use your creativity! A basic pattern will be provided, and then you will design and weave your basket. Some experience recommended. Due to preparation expenses, a refund may not be processed if cancellation occurs within five days of the program. **Registration required.*** 



ARCHERY FOR EVERYONE

All archery programs are held at Chickagami Park's outdoor archery range

Archery Practice (Ages 9+)

Tuesday, July 16, 10–10:30 AM, 10:45–11:15 AM & 11:30 AM–Noon

Saturday, July 27, 10:45–11:15 AM

Wednesday, August 14, 3–3:30 PM & 3:45–4:15 PM

Friday, September 13, 3–3:30 PM & 3:45–4:15 PM

Thursday, September 26, 4:45–5:15 PM

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

Introduction to Archery for Families

Tuesday, July 16, 1–2:30 PM

Saturday, July 20, 1–2:30 PM

Thursday, September 26, 6–7:30 PM

*Families with children ages 9+ learn the basics of target archery together. (No younger children, please) Participants must be 50" or taller, wear closed-toe shoes and be accompanied by an adult if under 18 years of age. **Registration required** for all participating.*

Archery Games for Adults

Tuesday, July 16, 3–4:30 PM

Wednesday, August 28, 10–11:30 AM

Friday, September 13, 1–2:30 PM

Friday, September 20, 4–5:30 PM

*Take the next step in improving your aim through playing archery games. Must have participated in one of our archery intro programs to register. **Registration required.***

Introduction to Archery for Adults

Saturday, July 20, 3–4:30 PM

Wednesday, August 14, 10:30 AM–Noon

Wednesday, August 28, 12:30–2 PM

Friday, September 20, 2–3:30 PM

*Adults will learn the basics of target archery together. Please wear close-toed shoes. **Registration required.***

Introduction to Archery for Kids (Ages 9-16)

Saturday, July 27, 9–10:30 AM

*Learn the basics of target archery. Participants must be 50" or taller, wear closed-toe shoes and be accompanied by an adult; not a drop-off program. **Registration required** for child only.*

Archery Games for Families

(Ages 9+ w/adult)

Wednesday, August 14, 1–2:30 PM

*Take the next step in improving your aim through playing archery games. Must have participated in one of our archery intro programs to register. **Registration required** for all participating.*

Archery Games for Kids

(Ages 9-16)

Sunday, August 18, 9:30–11 AM

*Take the next step in improving your aim through playing archery games. Must have participated in one of our archery intro programs to register. Children must be accompanied by adult. **Registration required.***

Introduction to Archery for Home-school Families

Friday, September 13, 10:30 AM–Noon

*For home-school 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; not a drop-off program. **Registration required** for all participating.*

EARTH DAY 2024

Geauga Park District's two-year 1,000 Trees Earth Day initiative wrapped at Veterans Legacy Woods on April 21. HUGE THANKS to all our generous sponsors and hard-working volunteers!

RED OAK SPONSOR
\$3,000



ONETREEPLANTED

Toddy & Jim
McMonagle



Planting Stats for Earth Day Weekend 2024

- 320 3-to-6-foot Ohio native trees/shrubs & bare root saplings planted by volunteers
- 84 volunteers planted in the morning
- 62 volunteers planted in the afternoon
- 8 incredible sponsors & 2 in-kind sponsors



SUGAR MAPLE SPONSOR
\$1,500

Virginia Poirier



In Memory of
FRANK MURZYNSKI



Nature Writing Contest Winners

Congratulations to these 27 talented winners of our 29th Annual Nature Writing Contest!

Child Poetry

1stEvelyn Rice
2ndEla Yogenthiran
3rdTucker Littman
HMGabrielle Armstrong
HMSean Walsh

Child Prose

1stJohn Gordon
2ndAvery Blank
3rdAhmen Salman
HMNoah DeLuca
HMAmina DiCorleto-Khan

Adolescent Poetry

1stJiawen Hu
2ndGianna Paterniti
3rdZachary Harvey
HMPresley Burkholder

Adolescent Prose

1stNathan Thomas
2ndJosiah Bihary
3rdChrysanthi Constantinou
HMShriya Iyer

Adult Poetry

1stKevin Pitorak
2ndLori Black
3rdLucy McNeas
HMTamara Cabrera-Perrine
HMSarah Marcus-Donnelly

Adult Prose

1stPatricia Fox
2ndHallie Chavez
3rdDiana Kresnye
HMJimmy Miller

Thank you, Foundation for Geauga Parks,

for again sponsoring more substantial cash prizes in 2024!

Enjoy all the winning works, and learn more about the contest and our judges, on our website under News & Updates.

ADVENTURES in Geocaching



N 41° 33.804
W -81° 08.550'

Check out the new geocache
at Claridon Woodlands in Claridon Twp.

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

You still need to drive, but walking
aside, this one's a quick grab, so please
don't be sad. Green, white and blue, but
not the best view. The spot's near some
pines, and don't park to avoid fines. If
this park's new to you, take a minute or
two – there's so much around aside from
where this cache can be found!

AND THE NOMINEES FOR BEST TRAILS ARE...

Vote for your favorite five
individual trails by July 31 at
<https://bit.ly/gpdtop10trails>
or by scanning
this QR code

We'll unveil
the winners
of our Top 10
Trails Contest
at The Great
Geauga
County Fair,
publish them in our fall *Park
Explorer*, and program them
for fall/winter naturalist-led
hikes. Perhaps you'll choose to
explore them all independently
as well. May the best trails win!



Beechnut Trail & Whitetail Trail

BEARTOWN LAKES RESERVATION

Summit Trail

BESSIE BENNER METZENBAUM PARK

Boreal Trail, Hemlock Trail, Mountain Bike Trail & Trillium Trail

BIG CREEK PARK

Hickory Trail

CHICKAGAMI PARK

Duane Ferris Trail

ELDON RUSSELL PARK

Big Bluestem Trail

FROHRING MEADOWS

Eagle Trail

HEADWATERS PARK

The Maple Highlands Trail

CENTRAL SECTION

Interurban Trail

THE ROOKERY

Razorback Trail & Valley Trail

SWINE CREEK RESERVATION

Woodland Trail

SUNNYBROOK PRESERVE

Cattail Trail

WALTER C. BEST WILDLIFE PRESERVE

Ansel's Cave Trail & Pioneer Bridle Trail

THE WEST WOODS

Gorge Overlook Trail

WELTON'S GORGE



Donations to
Geauga Park District
February through
April 2024

Thank You to All of Our Generous Donors

Middlefield VFW Post 9678	1,000 Trees Sponsorship	\$250.00
Town & Country Garden Club of Cleveland	1,000 Trees Sponsorship	\$250.00
The Pattie Group	1,000 Trees Sponsorship	\$500.00
Thrive	1,000 Trees Sponsorship	\$500.00
St. Dominic School	1,000 Trees Sponsorship	\$250.00
James J McMonagle	1,000 Trees Sponsorship	\$3,000.00
Virginia Poirier	1,000 Trees Sponsorship	\$1,500.00
Protect Geauga Parks	Solar Eclipse Sponsorship	\$500.00
Foundation for Geauga Parks	Solar Eclipse Sponsorship	\$3,000.00
Jamie Horsburgh	Donation in memory of Ian Roche	\$50.00
Charles Johns	Donation in memory of Al Grimm	\$50.00
The Cleveland Foundation Hanes Family Fund	Annual Fund	\$5,000.00
The Cleveland Foundation Hanes Family Fund	<i>Nature Scopes</i>	\$500.00
Whitetails Unlimited	Donation for controlled hunting	\$2,000.00
Burroughs Nature Club	Honorarium for naturalist program	\$150.00

SYZYGY!

Did you know we experienced a **syzygy** this past April? A syzygy (pronounced siz-eh-gee) is an alignment of three objects in outer space. The result in this case, of course, was the total solar eclipse that awed us all on April 8. Reflecting on that event, it is difficult to put the whole thing into words. It put into perspective a human being's relationship to the powerful forces that govern our solar system, over which we have no control! The eclipse was a great example not soon to be forgotten. Perhaps some of you know that Geauga Park District was involved with the Eclipse Soundscapes citizen science project, a NASA-funded project studying what animals do during a solar eclipse. It involved placing remote audio recording devices out in various habitats two days before the eclipse, then collecting them again two days after the eclipse. The sound cards were then sent back to NASA for analysis. Before sending them back, though, I also copied the sound files so I could do my own analysis. Two recording devices were placed at Eldon Russell Park; one was in the floodplain facing the river, the other in the meadow where the woodcocks do their aerial courtship display. Would the woodcocks do their display during the eclipse? According to the sound file, the answer is no, they did not. What did happen? About one minute before totality, bird songs diminished and the Spring Peepers tuned up. Peepers remained prominent during totality and for about four minutes afterward, then they faded as bird songs returned. This was not an unexpected result, but it was nice to know how it played out just the same. Still enjoying a post-eclipse "high"... 🍀





Playing our free, app-based game is easy and fun for the whole family! You'll all leave with new Nature knowledge and a drive to explore more. To get started:



1. Watch Naturalist Trevor's tutorial on YouTube. (This QR code will take you there!)



2. Install the Agents of Discovery app from wherever you download your apps and create your account.

3. Visit our website under Geocaching & Location-Based Games to view your current mission.

2024 summer camps

SOME OPENINGS STILL AVAILABLE for youth entering grades 5-7

All Monday through Friday 9 AM-3 PM. Activity details online.

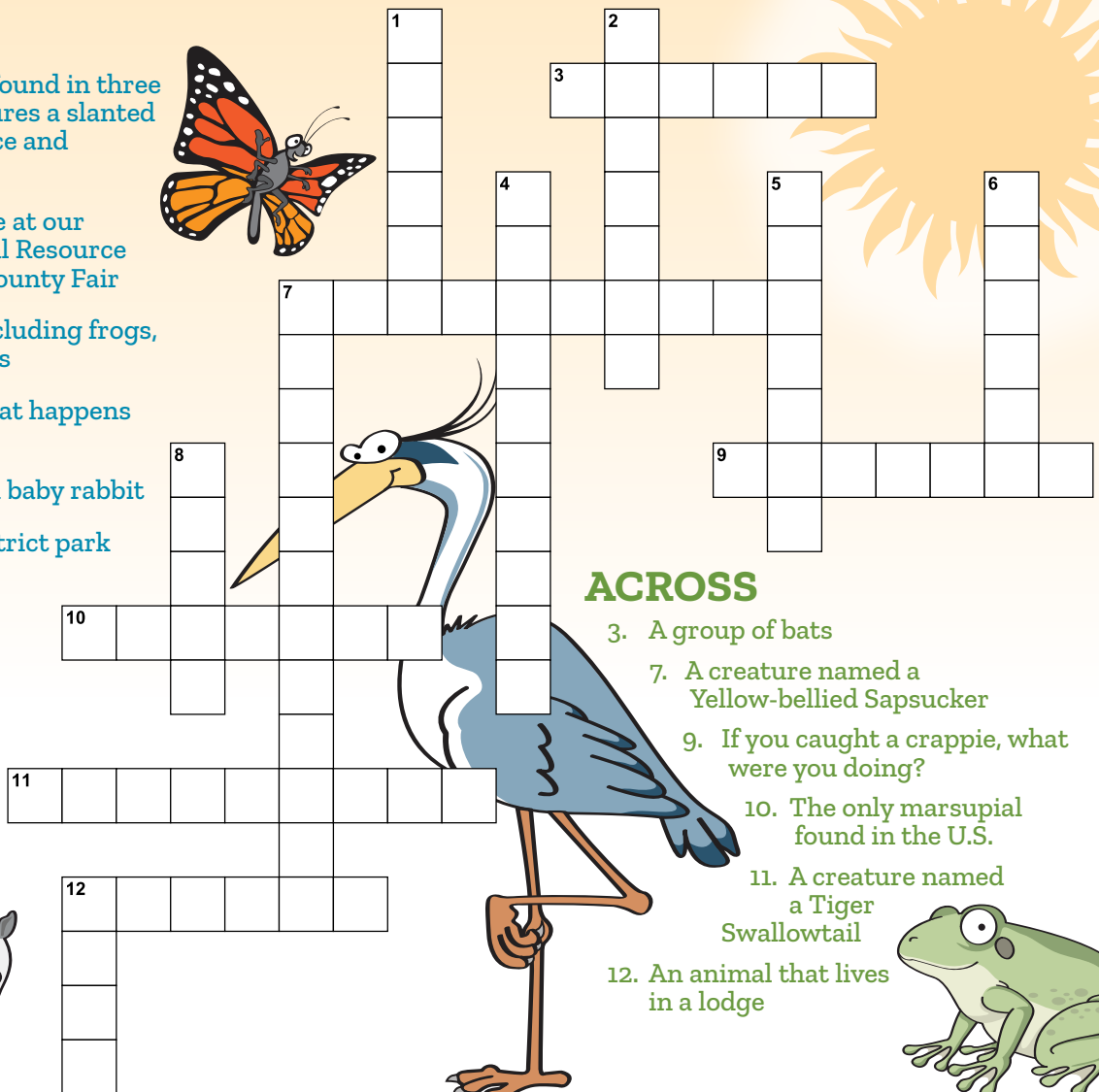
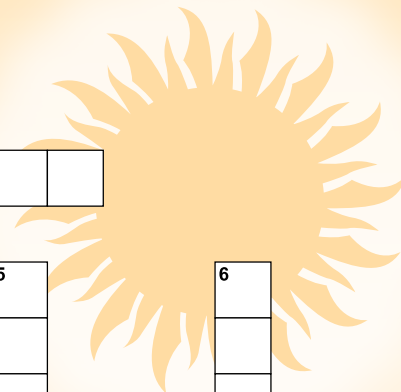
Junior Naturalist Day Camp July 22 - 26

Nature Adventure Day Camp July 29 - August 2 & August 5 - 9

Summertime Crossword Puzzle

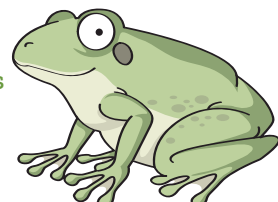
DOWN

1. A camping structure found in three of our parks that features a slanted roof and stone fireplace and sleeps 4-5
2. A butterfly you can see at our building in the Natural Resource Area at The Geauga County Fair
4. A group of animals including frogs, toads and salamanders
5. The meteor shower that happens every August
6. The proper name for a baby rabbit
7. Your Geauga Park District park nicknamed "Gauga's Little Grand Canyon"
8. The animal you would find in a rookery
12. A creature called a sandpiper



ACROSS

3. A group of bats
7. A creature named a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
9. If you caught a crappie, what were you doing?
10. The only marsupial found in the U.S.
11. A creature named a Tiger Swallowtail
12. An animal that lives in a lodge

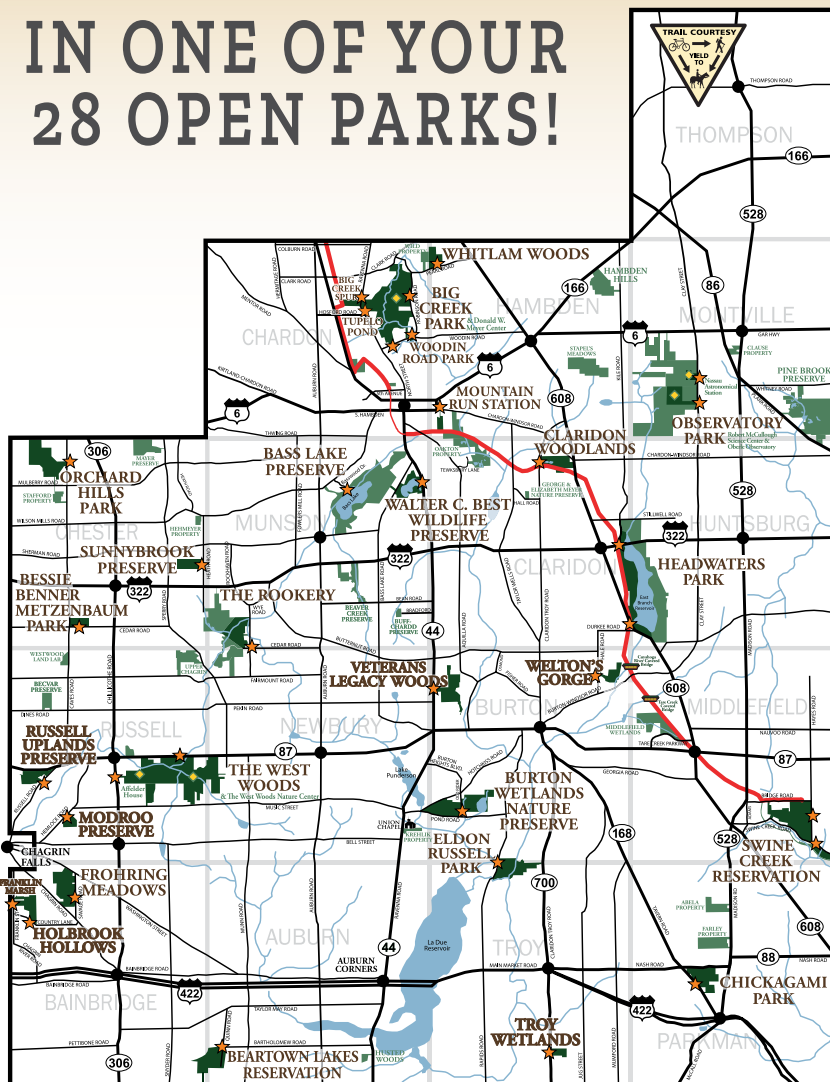




Geauga Park District
 9160 Robinson Road
 Chardon, OH 44024-9148

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 28 OPEN PARKS!



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www.geaugaparkdistrict.org

440-286-9516



**SOAK UP
 SUMMER!**

IN YOUR GEAUGA
 PARK DISTRICT

Visit the new
 Troy Wetlands

Enjoy free outdoor music &
 movies on 4 Saturday evenings

**Nights Out
 in the Parks**

DOWN: 1. LEANTO, 2. MONARCH, 4. AMPHIBIANS, 5. PERSEID, 6. KITTEN, 7. WELTONSGORGE, 8. HERON, 12. BIRD
 ACROSS: 3. COLONY, 7. WOODPECKER, 9. FISHING, 10. OPOSSUM, 11. BUTTERFLY, 12. BEAVER