

# Metro Parks E-Newsletter

Columbus & Franklin County



*feel free!*

June 29, 2009

## Fourth of July fun

There's no better place to celebrate the Fourth of July Weekend than at one of your 15 Metro Parks. Many of the parks are quite busy on this weekend, so you may want to plan on arriving early to get that perfect picnic spot or consider a few parks that may not be so busy such as Clear Creek, Glacier Ridge or Prairie Oaks.

## Sunny Sundays return to Inniswood Metro Gardens

Members of the Central Ohio Unit of the Herb Society of America will be in the Herb Garden to answer your questions on every Sunday throughout summer, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.



If you have a question about some aspect of nature or about a Metro Park, the naturalists at Blendon Woods Metro Park can help. Email your question to [enaturalist@metroparks.net](mailto:enaturalist@metroparks.net). Most questions will be answered by the end of the next business day.

## More on your Metro Parks

**website:** [www.metroparks.net](http://www.metroparks.net)  
**Infoline:** 614.508.8000  
**Telephone:** 614.891.0700

## Condolences

We extend our condolences to the friends and family of Jeff Swanagan, and to our good friends at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium... [more](#)

## Gypsy moths at Highbanks

In early May it became apparent that an isolated gypsy moth outbreak was present along the trail system at Highbanks Metro Park... [more](#)

## Celebrate National Park and Recreation month

Since 1985, America has celebrated July as the nation's official Park and Recreation Month... [more](#)

## Red, White and Boom

If you are looking for a special place to watch Red, White and Boom, Scioto Audubon Metro Park might be the place for you... [more](#)

## Kids and the outdoors are a natural at your Metro Parks

Nature Adventure camps are underway in the Metro Parks. More than 670 kids, an increase of 10 percent, are getting out and getting in touch with nature... [more](#)

## Save the date

Please join us for The Grange Insurance Audubon Center & Scioto Audubon Metro Park ribbon cutting celebration on Friday, Aug. 28, 2009... [more](#)

## Independence Day walk on the greenway

Join Metro Parks' naturalist Scott Felker for a 6-mile hike along the Blacklick Creek Greenway trail at 8 a.m. on July 4.... [more](#)

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## Condolences

We extend our condolences to the friends and family of Jeff Swanagan, and to our good friends at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. As Executive Director of the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Jeff was a leader in the strong conservation partnership between Metro Parks and the Zoo. Jeff passed away Sunday after spending the morning watching over the surgery on Colo, the Zoo's famous gorilla. Jeff will be missed by all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John O'Meara".

John O'Meara

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## Gypsy moths at Highbanks

In early May it became apparent that an isolated gypsy moth outbreak was present along the trail system at Highbanks Metro Park. Local infestations, such as this one, produce large numbers of caterpillars that have the ability to defoliate trees in the area. Gypsy moths have occurred in the past at Blendon Woods and Battelle Darby Creek Metro Parks, however not to the extent currently found at Highbanks.

Metro Parks has been in contact with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Division of Forestry regarding the issue. While it is too late to perform any type of treatment this year, we are working to schedule a treatment of Gypcheck for next year. This agent is applied aurally to a given area and targets specifically gypsy moths. Other agents that are used to treat gypsy moth infestations are very broad spectrum and will impact several hundred species of moths, butterflies and other insects.

A naturally occurring fungus, *Entomophaga*, infects high-density concentrations of gypsy moths, and may even cause a natural crash in their numbers. The large number of dead gypsy moth caterpillars at Highbanks suggests that this fungus is already in the soil and is limiting the extent of the outbreak, although it will still require treatment next year.

Many people are concerned about the mortality of the defoliated trees. In large infestations, it takes two or three complete defoliations for a tree to die. If a tree is already naturally stressed, a defoliation and related weather stresses could lead to the demise of trees. Metro Parks is hopeful that most of the affected trees will return to normal health next year.

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## Celebrate National Park and Recreation Month

Since 1985, America has celebrated July as the nation's official Park and Recreation Month. Spending the day at a Metro Park is not only great for your wallet, it's great for your health too. It's a wonderful way to bond with your family, connect with loved ones and improve your mental and physical health.

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## Red, White and Boom

If you are looking for a special place to watch Red, White and Boom, Scioto Audubon Metro Park at 395 W. Whittier Street might be the place for you, particularly if you want to turn this into a daylong family event. Compared with previous years, more areas are open to the public. Parking is limited and it is likely we will run out of parking spaces and Whittier Street will be closed at Front Street. There are some great views of the fireworks and there is trail access to downtown via the Scioto Greenway Trail. Metro Parks' rangers and Columbus Police officers will be patrolling the area. Vehicles must be parked in designated areas and we ask that beer, alcohol and fireworks not be used in the park.

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## **Kids and the outdoors are a natural at your Metro Parks**

Nature Adventure camps are underway in the Metro Parks. More than 670 kids, an increase of 10 percent, are getting out and getting in touch with nature.

At one of the more popular camps, CSI (Critters Scene Investigators), kids in grades one to three investigate animal behavior through tracks, scat and other clues left behind. Pre-schoolers in the Peek-A-Boo and Nature Too camp are exploring and observing clouds, bugs and critters that live in and around the water.

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## Save the date

Please join us for The Grange Insurance Audubon Center & Scioto Audubon Metro Park ribbon cutting celebration on Friday, Aug. 28, 2009 at 395 W. Whittier Street. The ribbon cutting ceremony begins at 10 a.m.

A GIFT FOR  
*our community*

GRANGE INSURANCE  
Audubon  
CENTER

Center & Park Dedication  
**SAVE THE DATE**  
August 28, 2009

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## **Independence Day walk on the greenway**

Join Metro Parks' naturalist Scott Felker for a 6-mile hike along the Blacklick Creek Greenway trail at 8 a.m. on July 4. Plan on spending about two hours as Scott points out wildlife along the way. Meet at the Glacier Knoll Picnic area on the west side of Bowen Road. Be sure to bring plenty of water and wear a hat.