

ParkScope

Winter 2011/12

Your Metro Parks

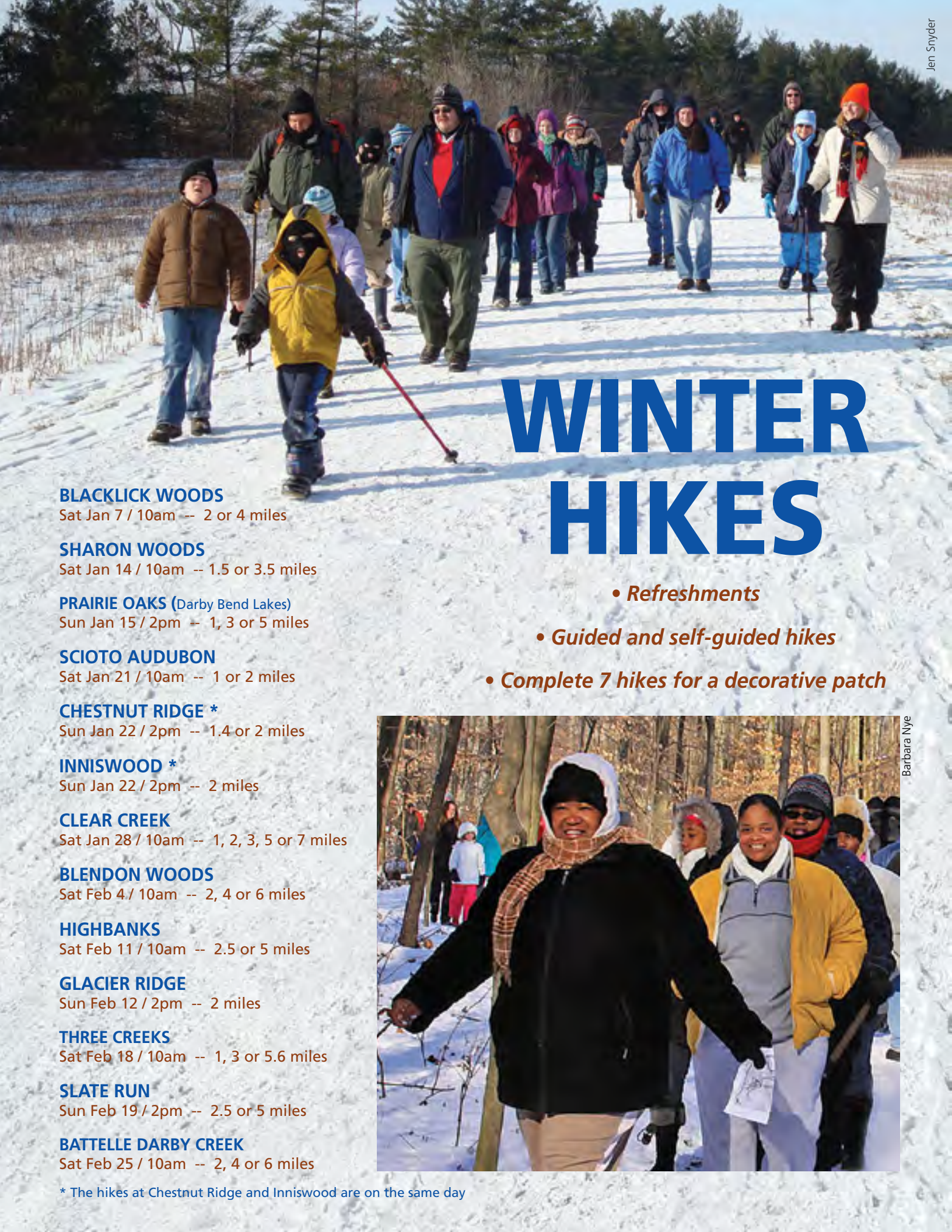


Let it snow!



Winter canoeing

Focus on frogs



WINTER HIKES

BLACKLICK WOODS

Sat Jan 7 / 10am -- 2 or 4 miles

SHARON WOODS

Sat Jan 14 / 10am -- 1.5 or 3.5 miles

PRAIRIE OAKS (Darby Bend Lakes)

Sun Jan 15 / 2pm -- 1, 3 or 5 miles

SCIOTO AUDUBON

Sat Jan 21 / 10am -- 1 or 2 miles

CHESTNUT RIDGE *

Sun Jan 22 / 2pm -- 1.4 or 2 miles

INNISWOOD *

Sun Jan 22 / 2pm -- 2 miles

CLEAR CREEK

Sat Jan 28 / 10am -- 1, 2, 3, 5 or 7 miles

BLENDON WOODS

Sat Feb 4 / 10am -- 2, 4 or 6 miles

HIGHBANKS

Sat Feb 11 / 10am -- 2.5 or 5 miles

GLACIER RIDGE

Sun Feb 12 / 2pm -- 2 miles

THREE CREEKS

Sat Feb 18 / 10am -- 1, 3 or 5.6 miles

SLATE RUN

Sun Feb 19 / 2pm -- 2.5 or 5 miles

BATTELLE DARBY CREEK

Sat Feb 25 / 10am -- 2, 4 or 6 miles

• Refreshments

• Guided and self-guided hikes

• Complete 7 hikes for a decorative patch

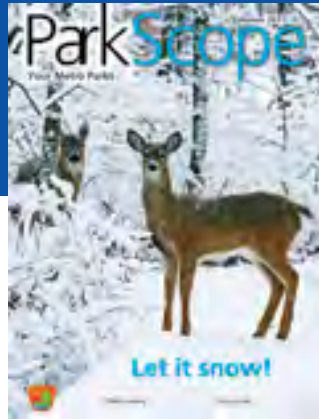


Barbara Nye

* The hikes at Chestnut Ridge and Inniswood are on the same day

Parkscope

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Metro Parks Headquarters

1069 W. Main Street
Westerville OH 43081-1181
614.891.0700

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A quarterly gallery of images from some of the area's best photographers.



Killdeer at Glacier Ridge wetlands, by Edith Wood

Your Metro Parks

Established in 1945, Metro Parks operates 16 parks in seven Central Ohio counties. Metro Parks protects more than 26,000 acres of land and water and offers year-round recreational and educational opportunities for youth and adults. Facilities and programs are available to the public free-of-charge—made possible by voter support of the 2009 Metro Parks levy.

Metro Parks is a separate political subdivision of the state of Ohio organized under Ohio Revised Code, Section 1545. Metro Parks' Board of Park Commissioners, composed of three citizens who serve three-year terms without compensation, governs the Park District. Board members are appointed by the Judge of the Probate Court of Franklin County.

Metro Parks' Board of Park Commissioners meets monthly. Meetings are open to the public. Visit www.metro parks.net for meeting time, dates and location.

Board of Park Commissioners

Frances Beasley
Greg S. Lashutka
J. Jeffrey McNealey
Executive Director
John R. O'Meara

The Mission of Metro Parks is to conserve open spaces, while providing places and opportunities that encourage people to discover and experience nature.



Get out and play!

There is great concern over the physical well being of our children who are being deprived of the numerous benefits associated with outdoor play. Richard Louv documented many of the issues in his book *Last Child in the Woods*. We now recognize that many of the issues associated with the growing problem of childhood obesity can be traced to the fascination with electronic games and entertainment. This coupled with perceived fears of danger is leading to a generation that no longer enjoys outdoor play.

The concern is not only for children that are coming of age in this technological world. In fact most of us, including parents and grandparents, regularly use the technology that can be so alluring. Computers are great tools that can help us to be more efficient and are transforming the way we communicate. Unfortunately, the temptation to spend hours on end playing computer games or watching television is likely to interfere with our own health and well being as well as the health and well being of our children.

What can we do about this? Yes, the Metro Parks and other organizations provide many opportunities to enjoy programs and activities in the great outdoors. But you shouldn't rely entirely on the programs that are available in our community. We all need to get out and play for our own sake. By play, I mean do something that you enjoy – go fishing, hiking, biking or looking for salamanders. There are a thousand ways to enjoy healthy outdoor activities.

None of us are too old to enjoy a day playing in the Metro Parks. In fact, this will help to keep us feeling young. To locate community resources for you and your family to better experience nature directly check out the Leave No Child Inside Central Ohio Collaborative website <http://kidsandnature.org>.

We also need to set a good example for the children. As surprising as this may seem, many of them don't know how to play outside because they have never done it. They may have participated in team sports, and that can be a great experience, but that doesn't mean they ever explored a creek or chased lightning bugs on a hot summer's night. Many haven't experienced the sense of wonder that comes with discovering fascinating wildlife and the beautiful tapestry of life that surrounds us. If there are children in your life, is there a way that you can help them appreciate the wonders of nature?

Technological tools and distractions are here to stay. That doesn't mean we have to accept the negative consequences or fall prey to the unproductive temptations. Work for balance in your own lives and help children learn to discover the world around them. Start by getting out and enjoying a day in the Metro Parks. ■

John O'Meara, Executive Director

WINTER FUN



Photo by Rick Bennett

Metro Parks are a great place to wander and wonder anytime of the year, but for many, winter is a favorite season. The beauty and quiet of a winter woods is a great energizer. With more than 175 miles of trails, you can find many paths where nary a soul has traveled if you're seeking solitude. Visit www.metroparks.net to download park maps or scan the QR code at each park.

Skating Ponds

Battelle Darby Creek and Blendon Woods

Open 6:30am to 8pm. Call ahead to check if the ponds are open for skating. Phone 614.370.6254 for Battelle Darby Creek and 614.620.1861 for Blendon Woods.



Dan Bissonette

Sledding Hills

Battelle Darby Creek (south on Alkire Road, just east of Darby Creek bridge), **Blacklick Woods Golf Courses**, **Blendon Woods** (for kids only: turn right at ranger station and continue to dead end) **Highbanks** (Big Meadows Picnic Area), **Sharon Woods** (just north of park entrance on Cleveland Avenue). For conditions, call 614.891.0700 Mon-Fri, 8am to 4pm.

Cross-country skiing

Battelle Darby Creek, Blacklick Woods and Golf Courses, Blendon Woods, Chestnut Ridge, Clear Creek, Glacier Ridge, Heritage Trail, Highbanks, Pickerington Ponds, Prairie Oaks, Slate Run, Three Creeks and Walnut Woods. When ski conditions exist on designated trails.

Nature Centers

Be sure and visit one of the nature centers at **Blacklick Woods**, **Blendon Woods** or **Highbanks** and discover Ohio's natural and cultural history through exhibits and special programs. Each of the centers feature a "window on wildlife" where you can stay warm and toasty while watching birds and other animals gather at the feeder. Nature centers open at noon during the week and 10am on weekends and close at 5pm.

Nature Programs

Learn how animals survive winter, listen for the sounds of owls calling or take a rugged hike to an ice cave. These are just a few of the many free programs offered by park naturalists. This winter there are more than 250 programs for preschoolers through seniors. You may even want to schedule a naturalist program at your school or senior center by calling 614.508.8111.

Blacklick Woods Golf Courses

Even the coldest of weather doesn't seem to deter diehard golfers. The two courses at Blacklick are open year round. From Nov. 1 to March 31 there are no tee times, simply come out and play on a first-come, first-served basis. Call the Pro Shop (614.861.3193) in advance for confirmation that the courses are playable.



Dan Bissonette



Winter canoeing

Freshly falling snow softly blanketing the ground and trees is sometimes a rare and fleeting event in Central Ohio. If one is fortunate enough to view this spectacular scene while paddling in a canoe or kayak on one of your Metro Parks' creeks or rivers, it can be one of the most rewarding opportunities to experience during the months between the falling leaves and the first call of the robin.

As you glide quietly on the water, each stroke is erased in the clear water and a winter wonderland unfolds at each bend. The snow muffles the sound of the busy outside world and creates an illusion of complete solitude which immerses you only in the sounds of wind,

the water and the wildlife. The slightest breeze or hop of a chickadee sends the light snow cascading in a glittering shower of crystals. Ice forms around rocks like the rings of Saturn. Icicles, in shapes of bells and spires, hang from and adorn the banks.



Stone flies crawl from rivers and creeks onto snow and ice to mate.

Keep your eyes open

Prepare to be surprised by the variety of wildlife near, in and over the water. Bringing a pair of binoculars will afford you a closer view. Resident birds such as the brilliantly colored blue jays, the busy woodpeckers, the silent and patient great blue herons, soaring hawks, and even the occasional bald eagle fishing for its meal often can be seen and heard.

Andrew Boose

Keep an eye out for mammals that are active in winter. These include species such as the industrious beavers and muskrats, foraging deer and the energetic mink that you might see near the bank or in the water. Paddling silently may even allow you to get a glimpse

of an otter, recently reported as being seen at Three Creeks and Battelle Darby Creek Metro Parks.

While you may not see all these animals you may see their tracks. The snow and soft mud along the creek banks reveal an entire world of active winter animals. Bring a field guide to tracks as you might be surprised at the endless amount of entertainment it provides as you try to identify some of the mystery prints. As you paddle by the banks, take notice of the tracks left behind. Some animals have distinct prints such as the big webbed feet and dragging tail of the beaver; the tell-tale “Y” print of the great blue heron and the distinct bounding trail of the rabbit.

The water can be crystal clear in winter, providing an exciting glimpse of what goes on under the surface as your craft glides over the underwater world. Fish dart about, the occasional turtle might be seen swimming slowly and a very careful eye may even spot wintering aquatic insects. An odd phenomenon, which occurs in mid-January, are winter stone flies climbing out of the icy water to mate on the snowy banks.

Planning for winter paddling

Winter paddling can be challenging, and one of the biggest challenges is timing. If you are looking to make your trip during idyllic winter weather conditions, get your gear organized in advance along with a pre-planned route in order to make this happen.

If you are new to winter paddling, planning a short trip for your first time out is highly recommended. Watching the weather forecast a couple days in advance may give you a better idea of when your trip can happen. The window of opportunity will be short.

Make sure you know the limitations of your canoe. Cold weather can have an adverse effect on different materials. On really cold days, an aluminum canoe is your safest bet. However, even if someone triple-dog-dares you, DO NOT put your tongue on the aluminum canoe. Fiberglass canoes may shatter or crack in cold weather.

Make sure the water conditions are safe for paddling. A visual inspection is your best bet. If you are not comfortable with what you see don't go. If water conditions



Andrew Boose

An ice shelf overlies the running water of Clear Creek as water levels begin to fall after a thaw.



Andrew Boose

An intriguing ice formation on Alum Creek.

are right start with a float plan. A float plan is essential and serves to let another person, not accompanying you, know your paddling itinerary for the day. Pack a dry bag, specifically designed for paddling, with a change of clothes. Dumping or falling into the water in the winter can be a serious matter if you do not have dry clothes.

Wear your life jacket at all times. Not only is this a wise choice, it will also add an additional layer of insulation.

Keeping warm is essential. Hands and feet are the most difficult parts to keep warm. Well insulated waterproof boots that allow you to step in the water and stay dry are paramount. There are also different products, such as heat packs, for putting in boots to add warmth. Getting your hands wet is hard to avoid.

Waterproof paddling gloves work well but can be pricey. An alternative is to bring multiple pairs of warm gloves and store them in your dry bag. Keep one pair tucked under your shirt where they will stay warm



Annette Boose

Andrew Boose gets ready to launch his canoe from an access point to Big Walnut Creek.

and dry so you can exchange them with wet ones as necessary. Wear layers of clothing and avoid cotton because it absorbs moisture and does not dry well. Try polyester, wool or other synthetics that are breathable and dry quickly. A warm hat that covers your ears is a must.

Even on cloudy days, a pair of sunglasses are recommended, as snow covered ground can create a strong glare.



Annette Boose

A spectacular view from the Boose's canoe looking down the middle of Big Walnut Creek, bordered by snow-covered banks and trees.

Be cautious in bringing electronic and camera gear. Read your owners manual so you know the limitations of your equipment in regard to cold temperatures. An extra camera battery tucked in an inside pocket could be helpful as the cold tends to drain batteries.

A thermos of hot chocolate may be a welcome addition to your trip.

Canoe to Be Fit

Leisurely canoeing and kayaking are low impact recreational activities that can provide health benefits in addition to helping you enjoy the natural world around you.

The American Heart Association recommends 30 minutes of moderate activity per day in order to be physically fit. Paddling promotes relaxation of the body and mind, provides a light cardiovascular workout, and helps to strengthen and condition the muscles in the upper body.

It can also help boost your energy levels and expose you to sunlight which helps your body produce vitamin D. A 155-lb person will burn about 281 calories during

an hour of relaxed canoeing (Livestrong.com). When done on a regular basis paddling can be a great winter workout and provide an alternative to using indoor fitness equipment, which can sometimes become monotonous.

Where to paddle

Your Metro Parks provide many opportunities for enjoying winter activities. If a winter paddle entices you to venture into the outdoors try visiting one of the following streams: Blacklick Creek, Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek, Walnut Creek, Big Darby Creek, Little Darby Creek, Clear Creek, the Olentangy River and the Scioto River. These areas are each accessible from one or more of the parks. Paddling is a versatile activity that you can enjoy on your own or with a group. So the next time the weatherman calls for a covering of snow, grab your gear and prepare to be dazzled. ☐

[Andrew Boose, Metro Parks Arborist & Annette Boose, Otterbein University](#)



Annette Boose

A muskrat on the bank of Big Walnut Creek.



Andrew Boose

Ice formations on the banks of Clear Creek.

SNOW

Three naturalists from Blacklick Woods write about snow

Plants and snow

When people see snow, it's usually a sign to break out the sleds and the hot cocoa. Most of us pay little mind to the trees and plants that sit covered in snow throughout the winter, only to greet us in spring with their beautiful foliage and flowers. How do these plants make it through the winter? The snow traps any water in a frozen form, making it unusable for the plants. This creates a desert-like environment for our photosynthesizing friends. Luckily, plants have developed lots of ways to make it through the winter, and snow plays a big factor in their survival.

The unique structure of a snowflake allows snow to hold a lot of air, helping it to act as an insulator. This insulation protects the roots of flowers, shrubs and trees, much like a coat protects us in the winter months. This is especially important for perennial plants. Although all green growth has died off, the roots of perennial plants stay alive all winter underground.

Snow helps in other ways too. It is a poor heat conductor, so even though air temperatures vary throughout the winter season, the snow keeps the soil temperature fairly constant. If the soil temperature varied as much as the air temperature, the rapid changes could cause a lot of damage to roots.

The effects of snow aren't all good. Snow can accumulate on tree branches. That much snow gets pretty heavy, sometimes causing branches to break. This may be part of the reason deciduous trees lose their



Frank Kozarich

Blackberry leaves with a crusting of frost. Deer are particularly fond of blackberry leaves in winter.

leaves. In addition to saving the tree a lot of energy, bare branches can't hold nearly as much snow as a tree covered in leaves.

Most conifers, on the other hand, keep their needles throughout winter. These needles are full of sugar and essential oils that keep them from freezing. They also require less energy than a regular leaf, and are less likely to hold a lot of snow. The conical shape of conifers helps them to shed snow. These trees are perhaps the best adapted for snow because they are originally from colder, snowier climates.

Whether good or bad, the impact that snow has on plants is noticeable in the winter. So, whether you're building a snowman, or participating in a winter hike at one of our Metro Parks, think about the snow and the effects it has on some of our common plants. ■

Katie Lambert
Blacklick Woods Naturalist Intern



Deb Sebra

Rose hips, fruit of the rose, encased in ice.

Animals and snow

Have you ever wondered what animals do when it snows? For many species, food sources and water are buried under snow and ice. But to other animals, snow is a protective layer providing warmth and cover from predators.

One way animals deal with snow is to sleep. Well, not sleep exactly! Many animals undergo a type of torpidity, or change in their body's metabolism. Hibernation is the most dramatic example of this. True hibernators cannot be easily woken up and are largely unresponsive to external stimuli. The often-used example for hibernators, the black bear, is not a true hibernator because it actually can be awakened quite easily.

Groundhogs are true hibernators. A groundhog's heart rate goes from 80 beats a minute when active to four or five beats a minute when in hibernation. Its body temperature drops from 98 degrees Fahrenheit to 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Less extreme than hibernation is torpor. Skunks and raccoons enter a state of torpor where they are able to live off the fat they stored during the summer and fall. They are easily awakened and come out during nicer weather to search for food.

Cold-blooded animals are more accurately said to go dormant. They lack the internal mechanisms to produce heat that warm-blooded animals have. Reptiles and amphibians move to protected places underground, or under water, to avoid freezing temperatures and snow. Freezing liquid in their cells can destroy tissue, but some species can tolerate low levels of ice between cells. Spring peepers, chorus frogs, gray tree frogs and wood frogs can tolerate a frozen state. These frogs thaw out in spring, which is why we hear them sing so early in the season.



Tim Daniel

Minks do not hibernate. These members of the weasel family have to hunt food throughout winter.

Then there are those animals that don't hibernate at all. Foxes, weasels and other predators have to hunt throughout the winter. They have a well-developed sense of hearing or smell to be able to hunt for prey buried beneath the snow. Flying squirrels, who normally live alone, will occupy collective dens to conserve body heat. The white-tailed deer grows a winter coat with longer hair. This hair is also hollow inside to provide good insulation against the cold. This adaptation works so well that snow won't melt after landing on the deer.

These animals have all adapted to dealing with the inconvenience of a winter snow. However, there are animals that rely on the snow for warmth and protection. On cold nights, ruffed grouse will fly into a deep snowdrift. The snow provides a very effective barrier against severe cold and wind. They will rest under the snow until the severe

weather passes.

Small mammals such as mice and meadow voles remain active throughout the winter. They make little haystack nests to keep them warm during the winter and they create tunnel systems among the grasses under the snow. This hides them from hawks and other predators. The temperature is much warmer beneath the snow. Air is trapped amongst the snowflakes as they fall and this provides good insulation. The temperature under a layer of snow does not usually fall below freezing. The heat from any animals or plants under the snow is trapped in a warm "igloo."

The next time you are shoveling snow, don't forget the animals who have escaped it, by migrating or going dormant, and those that welcome it, and build tunnels and igloos into it. ■

Jamie Kidwell
Blacklick Woods Naturalist

The snowflake



Snowflakes by Andrew Boose

Snowflakes display the extraordinary property of a fractal, with each part of its beautiful shape being an approximate copy of every other part.

The cold, drier air of winter causes a magical thing to happen. Not just the generating of static electricity when walking on a rug. Winter air creates delicate crystals of water that clump into flakes and fall to the ground. The flakes can become a carpet of white that reflects moonlight and helps sound travel greater distances. It creaks and squeaks underfoot. It lets us follow squirrels from tree to tree hours after they have moved through a yard. The falling crystal clumps, called snowflakes, are a special part of winter.

To make snow you need water vapor and air colder than 32°F, the freezing point of water. Both can be found high in the atmosphere most of the year. The cold air makes the water vapor solidify into ice crystals. Ice crystals are tightly organized water atoms. Atoms arrange in a hexagonal or six-sided shape. As more crystals form they group together into a six-sided snowflake.

Snowflakes can be delicate works of art. If the air in the cloud is close to 32°F, or between 10° to 0°F, the flakes can have six branching arms that look like feathers or ferns. These are “stellar dendrite” flakes. At the same temperatures the flakes can form as a more solid appearing set of concentric hexagons or “plates.” At around 20°F the flakes will be long and narrow “needles” or chunky-looking six-sided columns. Columns will also form below 0°F.

Most snowflakes are irregular or broken when they reach the ground. They may

have collided on the fall from the cloud, or not formed symmetrically. Finding the perfect snowflake is a fun activity on a snowy day. Catching the snow before it reaches the ground is one of the tricks to finding an unbroken flake. Use soft fabric, like fleece or velvet, to gently catch the delicate flakes. The darker the fabric the easier it will be to see the snow. The fabric needs to be cold to prevent the flake from melting. Use a magnifying glass to get an up-close look at the flake. Photographing snowflakes can also be a fun challenge. Use the macro setting to catch some of the detail. Whether using a magnifier or camera be sure to hold your breath while looking to prevent melting.

You can grow snowflakes anytime of the year by building a chamber with super-

saturated humid air that is very cold.

This sounds very high-tech, but actually uses easily found items. The parts needed include a 20-ounce plastic bottle, foam cups big enough to hold the bottle with an inch on the sides, a sponge, light-weight fishing line, a paperclip and dry ice. Ice cream stores often carry dry ice. The bottle is the chamber. The sponge holds the water to form water vapor and the dry ice super cools the air in the chamber. Fragile snowflakes will grow on the fishing line. For complete instructions go to <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/project/project.htm>. ■

Diana Morse
Blacklick Woods Naturalist

Snow Facts and Fiction

No two snowflakes are alike? This is a good philosophy question! No one has seen every snowflake, so this could be a false statement, but snowflakes are so complex it is probably true.

It doesn't snow in the summer? Snow can fall during warm weather. The air around the clouds can be cold enough to form snow, but it melts before reaching the ground.

Why is snow white when water is clear? Ice crystals reflect all colors of light, so snow looks white.

Focus on frogs



David Celebrezze

A spring peeper braves the cold as it walks across a melting sheet of ice. Peepers can survive temperatures as low as eight degrees Fahrenheit.

Amphibians are often viewed as organisms that provide a good indication of the health of an ecosystem.

They breathe through their skin in addition to their gills or lungs. As a result, pollution has an additional pathway through which it can adversely affect frogs. Because they reside in two very different habitats at different stages of their lives, they serve as good indicators of the health of both aquatic and terrestrial habitats in an area.

In addition to being great environmental indicators, their beautiful songs, interesting mating behaviors, unique appearance, and presence in a variety of aquatic habitats, make amphibians great organisms for observation and study.

Overwintering

Did you ever wonder how frogs survive the winter? They are cold blooded, so their body temperature is regulated by the temperature of their environment. What happens to frogs when it's below 32°F outside?

To survive cold winter days, many frogs move to areas that don't freeze. Green frogs move from their warm weather habitat of ponds to small streams that remain unfrozen. Toads often burrow into the soil beneath the frost line.

However, wood frogs, northern spring peepers and gray tree frogs employ a different strategy. These frogs nestle themselves underneath dead leaves on the forest floor. On cold days, they actually freeze. Well, at least part of them freezes. They protect the most critical parts of their bodies by

accumulating sugars and other chemicals that act as antifreeze, while allowing non-critical parts of their bodies to freeze.

Frogs or toads

How do you tell the difference between a frog and a toad? Toads tend to have skin that feels drier to the touch than frogs' skin. Also, toads have "warts" on their skin. The warts are actually glands that release a burning chemical if the toad is picked up by a predator. Toads also have an oval shaped bump behind each eye, called a parotid gland.

Preparing for spring

Early spring is a great time to listen to frog songs and to encounter amphibians. Wood frogs, one of the earliest Ohio frogs



Andrew Boose

Aquatic ecologist Mac Albin studies a wood frog (bottom right) during a survey at Clear Creek.



Andrew Boose

One of the female wood frogs found in the breeding season at Clear Creek Metro Park.

to become active in the spring, breed in late February and early March. Wood frog populations are well established in the parks only at Slate Run and Clear Creek. In 2006, they were reintroduced into Blacklick Woods and Sharon Woods by Metro Parks staff, working with staff from The Ohio State University, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and The Nature Conservancy.

Wood frogs had historically been recorded in Blacklick Woods and Sharon Woods, but had disappeared prior to 2006. Wood frog egg masses have been checked each spring at these parks.

At Sharon Woods, the recorded number of egg masses increased dramatically in 2010 (the latest year for which records are currently available) from 26 to 445, although results at Blacklick Woods have shown a decline each year. Optimism remains that Blacklick Woods' numbers may recover in the same way as Sharon Woods, as amphibian populations are known to fluctuate year on year.

Wood frogs live in damp forests and breed in vernal pools, wetlands that hold water in the spring but dry up as the summer progresses. A distinguishing characteristic of the wood frog is a black mask on its face.

Another early breeder, the western chorus frog, found in most Metro Parks, is identifiable by the presence of three stripes on its back and one dark strip on each side. They breed from late February to early May.

During breeding season, these small frogs sometimes call at all hours – day or night. Western chorus frogs live in prairies and fields and breed in small ponds. The mountain chorus frog, found only at Clear Creek, breeds from mid-March to late May. The mountain chorus frog lives in forests with hilly terrain and it has two arcs on its back.

Northern spring peepers and northern leopard frogs also breed from mid-March to late May and are seen in most of the parks. The spring peeper is identifiable by the dark "X" on its back and its small size. Their relatively high-pitched peeping call carries far from its source. Like wood frogs, spring peepers live in damp forests most of the year.

Leopard frogs are larger and have brown round spots on a green background on their backs. They can be found in meadows, fields, marshes, and around lakes and streams. They breed in streams, wetlands, lakes and temporary pools.

The pickerel frog, which looks similar to the northern leopard frog, begins breeding just a little bit later—from late March



Tim Daniel

Leopard frog



Al Staffan

Gray tree frog



Green frog

to early May. They have been recorded only at Battelle Darby Creek, Clear Creek, Pickerington Ponds and Slate Run.

Pickerel frogs have rectangular brown spots arranged in two rows on their backs. The inside of their back legs are yellow whereas the inside of the back of leopard frogs' legs are white. The skin of pickerel frogs release toxins to deter predators. Their preferred habitat is streams with forested riparian corridors.

Later breeding frogs and toads found in the Metro Parks begin their breeding season in April (American and Fowler's toads, gray tree frogs, green frogs) or May (northern cricket frog, American bullfrog).

Frog songs

It is sometimes easiest to identify frogs and toads by their breeding calls. To hear recordings of frog calls and learn more about these interesting amphibians, visit the Cleveland Museum of Natural History's website (www.cmnh.org) or download the Ohio Department of Natural Resource's "Ohio Amphibians" guide from www.dnr.state.oh.us. ■

Keely Davidson-Bennett
Resource Management Intern



Pickerel frog



A tadpole, the formative stage for all frogs and toads, with tiny back legs beginning to emerge.

Frogs and their calls

- Green frog *rubber band*
- Cricket frog *sleigh bells*
- Spring peeper *high pitched*
"peep peep peep"
- Bullfrog *deeply pitched*
"roooow roooow"
- Wood frog *quiet duck cluck*
- Chorus frog *running finger*
along comb
- Gray tree frog *"brrrrrrt"*
- Fowler's toad *screech*
- Pickerel frog *quiet snore*

Metro Parks Facilities

www.metroparks.net



Metro Park	Acres	Biking*	Bridle trail	Canoeing	Central Activities Area**	Cross-country skiing***	Disc golf	Enclosed facilities (reservable)	Fishing****	Golf course	Hiking	Ice skating	Inline skating	Jogging	Nature center	Natural play areas	Pet trails*****	Picnicking	Playground equipment	Shelters (non-reservable)	Shelters (reservable)	Sledding hills****
Battelle Darby Creek	7,060	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Blacklick Woods	643	●				●	●	●		●	●			●	●			●	●	●	●	●
Blendon Woods	653					●	●				●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Chestnut Ridge	486					●					●			●				●	●	●		●
Clear Creek	5,260			●		●		●			●			●				●	●	●		●
Glacier Ridge	1,036	○	○			○	○				○			○				○	○	○		○
Heritage Park & Trail	87	●	●			●					●		●	●				●	●	●		●
Highbanks	1,159	●		●		●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Inniswood Metro Gardens	123	○									○			○				○	○	○		○
Pickerington Ponds	1,600	●				●					●	●	●	●				●	●	●		●
Prairie Oaks	2,091	●	●	●		●		●		●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Scioto Audubon	120	●		●	●	●		●		●	●		●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●
Sharon Woods	761	●						●			●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Slate Run Park & Farm	1,705		●			●	●				●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Three Creeks	1,067	●	●			●		●			●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●	●
Walnut Woods	1,032	●				●					●			●				●	●	●	●	●

* Visitors can ride bikes along park roadways and through the picnic areas at all parks.

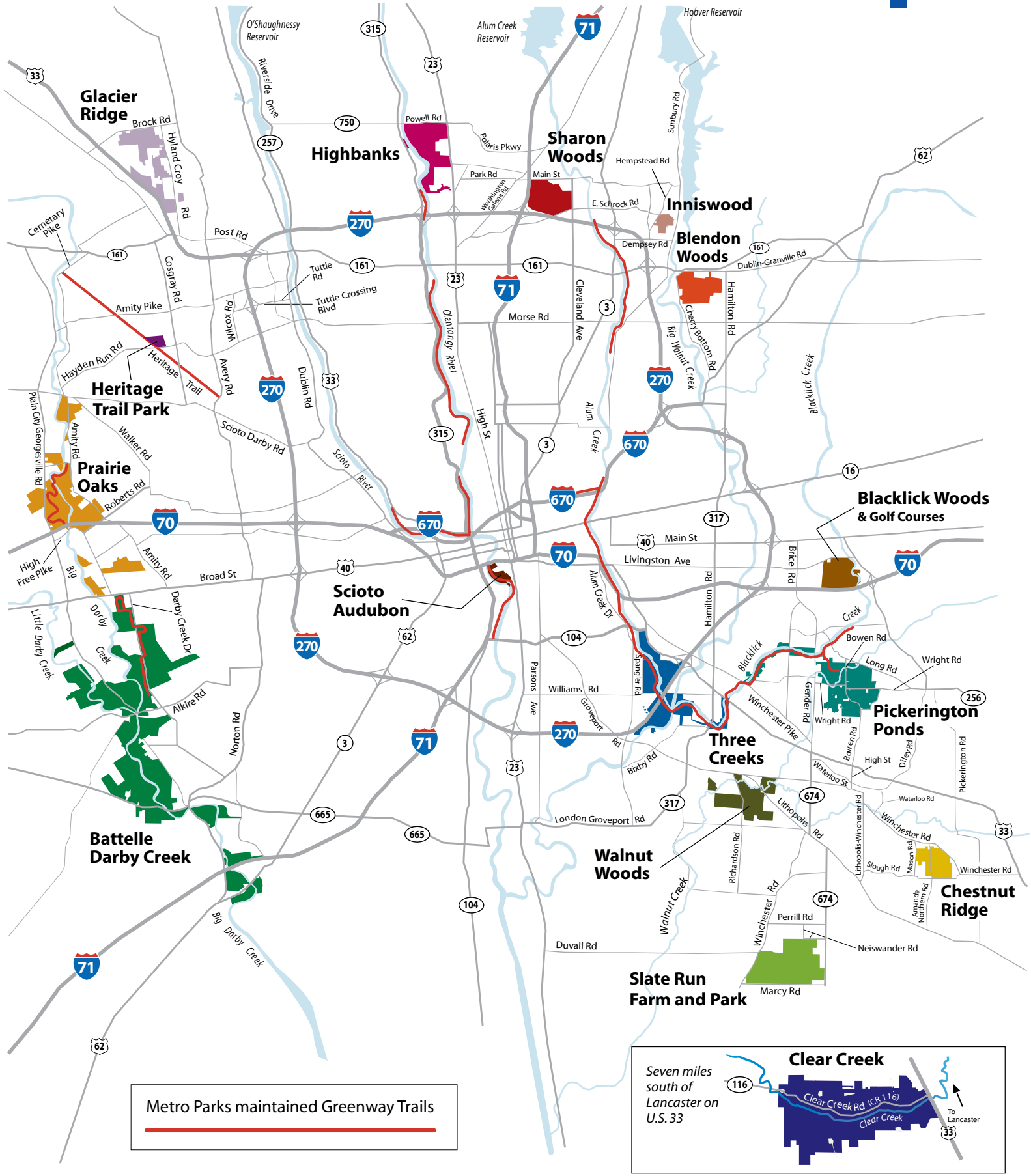
** Scioto Audubon's Central Activities Area features a climbing wall, sand volleyball courts and an interactive electronic game, NEOS, for two to four players.

*** Blacklick Woods Golf Course has skiing and sledding. Blendon Woods has a "kiddie's" sledding hill.

**** Kids 15 and younger and adults 60 and older can fish at Sharon Woods. Kids 15 and younger can also fish at Chestnut Ridge and Slate Run.

***** In addition to dedicated pet trails, domesticated dogs and cats are permitted in picnic areas and on roadways. Pets must be on a leash no longer than six-feet long.

Metro Parks Map &



Metro Parks maintained Greenway Trails

Clear Creek
 Seven miles south of Lancaster on U.S. 33

Directions



BATTELLE DARBY CREEK

1775 Darby Creek Drive
Galloway, OH 43119

From I-270 take the West Broad Street (U.S. 40) exit west. Go about 5 miles on Broad Street to Darby Creek Drive. Turn left onto Darby Creek Drive and proceed 3 miles. The main park entrance is on the right. The entrance to the Indian Ridge Picnic Area is 1 mile south of the main entrance, just south of Alkire Road, on the right.

BLACKLICK WOODS & GOLF COURSES

6975 & 7309 E. Livingston Ave.
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

From I-270, take the East Main Street/Reynoldsburg exit. Go east on Main Street to Brice Road and turn right. Take Brice Road to Livingston Avenue and turn left. Entrance is about 1.5 miles on the right. Golf course is 1/4 mile beyond the park entrance.

BLENDON WOODS

4265 E. Dublin-Granville Road
Westerville, OH 43081

From I-270, take State Route 161 exit (30B) toward New Albany onto E. Dublin-Granville Road. Go 1.6 miles then take the Little Turtle Way exit and turn right. Go to Old State Route 161 and turn right. Entrance is 1/2 mile on left.

CHESTNUT RIDGE

8445 Winchester Road N.W.
Carroll, OH 43112

From I-270, take U.S. 33 east toward Lancaster. Go about 11 miles and turn right on Winchester Road (Carroll, OH traffic light). Entrance is about 3 miles on the left.

CLEAR CREEK

185 Clear Creek Road
Rockbridge, OH 43149

From I-270, take U.S. 33 east toward Lancaster about 31 miles. From Lancaster, continue on U.S. 33 south about seven miles to Clear Creek Road (County Route 116 – Sunoco gas station on the corner). Turn right on Clear Creek Road. Picnic areas, facilities and trails are located along Clear Creek Road for the next seven miles.

GLACIER RIDGE

9801 Hyland Croy Road
Plain City, OH 43064

Take I-270 toward Dublin. Take 33/161 west (exit 17B) toward Marysville. Follow 33/161 west to the 161/Plain City/Post Road exit. Turn right at the light and then immediately left on Hyland Croy Road. The Honda Wetland Education Area is 1 mile north on the left (7825 Hyland Croy Road). The park's main entrance is 2 miles further north, at the roundabout, opposite Glacier Ridge Elementary School.

HERITAGE PARK and TRAIL

7262 Hayden Run Road
Hilliard, OH 43026

From I-270 take Tuttle Road and turn left onto Wilcox Road. Turn right onto Hayden Run Road. Entrance is about 2 3/4 miles on the right.

HIGHBANKS

9466 U.S. 23 N.
Lewis Center, OH 43035

From I-270, take U.S. 23 North about 3 miles. Entrance is on the left, just before Powell Road.

INNISWOOD

940 S. Hempstead Road
Westerville, OH 43081

From I-270, take the Route 3/ Westerville Road exit south to Dempsey Road and turn left. Go about 1 mile to Hempstead Road and turn left. Turn again on Hempstead Road as it jogs right just past the Blendon Senior Center. The entrance is approximately 100 yards on the right.

PICKERINGTON PONDS

7680 Wright Road
Canal Winchester, OH 43110

From I-270 take U.S. 33 east toward Lancaster about 3 miles. Take the Canal Winchester/State Route 674/Gender Road exit. Turn left onto Gender Road, go about 1 mile and turn right onto Wright Road. Go about 1 mile to Bowen Road and turn left. Glacier Knoll picnic and parking area is about 1/4 mile on left.

PRAIRIE OAKS

3225 Plain City-
Georgesville Road
West Jefferson, OH 43162

Main Entrance: From I-270, take I-70 west to the Plain City-Georgesville Road/State Route 142 exit and go north on Route 142 about 0.8 miles. Entrance on right.

Sycamore Plains Trail 2009 Amity Road Hilliard, OH 43026

From Route 142 (Plain City-Georgesville Road) go about 1/4 mile south of I-70 exit. Turn left on High Free Pike. Go about 1 mile to Roberts Road and turn left. Go about 1 mile on Roberts Road to Amity Road and turn left. Entrance is on left.

Darby Bend Lakes 2755 Amity Road Hilliard, OH 43026

From I-270, take I-70 west to the West Jefferson/Plain City exit, turn right onto Plain City-Georgesville Road/State Route 142. Go about 2.25 miles to Lucas Road (passing the main park entrance) and turn right. Go across Big Darby Creek and turn right at the stop sign onto Amity Road. Entrance is about 0.5 miles on right.

Beaver Lake 8921 Lucas Road Plain City, OH 43064

From I-270 take I-70 west to West Jefferson/Plain City exit, turn right onto Plain City-Georgesville Road/State Route 142. Go about 2.25 miles to Lucas Road and turn right. Entrance is about 0.25 miles on right.

SCIOTO AUDUBON

400 W. Whittier St.
Columbus, OH 43215

From I-71, take the Greenlawn Avenue exit east 1/3 mile and turn left on S. Front St. Go 1/4 mile and turn left on W. Whittier St. Entrance is 1/3 mile on left.

SHARON WOODS

6911 Cleveland Ave.
Westerville, OH 43081

From I-270, take the Cleveland Avenue North exit. Entrance is about 1/2 mile on the left.

Spring Hollow Lodge

1069 W. Main St.
Westerville, OH 43081

(Cannot be accessed from Sharon Woods entrance). Continue north on Cleveland Avenue, past the main park entrance to Main Street and turn left. Go about 1.5 miles and turn left into the park.

SLATE RUN FARM and PARK

1375 S.R. 674 North
Canal Winchester, OH 43110

From I-270, take U.S. 33 east toward Lancaster to the Canal Winchester/State Route 674 exit. Turn right onto Gender Road/Route 674 and go about 2 miles until it dead-ends into Lithopolis Road. Turn left and go about 1/2 mile to Route 674. Turn right and go about 4 miles to the entrance on the right.

Slate Run Wetlands: Continue past main park entrance 1/2 mile to Marcy Road and turn right. Go 3 miles to Winchester Road and turn right. Wetlands entrance is about 2 miles on the right.

THREE CREEKS

3860 Bixby Road
Groveport, OH 43125

From I-270, take U.S. 33 east towards Lancaster about 1 mile. Turn right on Hamilton Road and go about 1.25 miles to Bixby Road and turn right. Entrance is about 0.75 miles on the right.

WALNUT WOODS

6723 Lithopolis Road,
Groveport, OH 43125

From I-270, take US 33 east toward Lancaster. Go about 1.3 miles then turn right on Hamilton Road/SR 317. Go about 2.7 miles and turn left onto Main Street/Groveport Road. Go 1.4 miles to Richardson Road and turn right. The entrance to the Tall Pines Area is about 1.1 miles on your right.

Metro Parks Guide

Metro Parks Headquarters

1069 W. Main Street
Westerville OH 43081-1181

Web site: www.metroparks.net

E-mail: info@metroparks.net

Information: 614.891.0700

Reservations: 614.508.8111

Fax: 614.895.6208

InfoLine: 614.508.8000

TTY: 614.895.6240

For help visiting facilities or with activities, please call 614.891.0700.

Inniswood Metro Gardens

Call 614.895.6216

Slate Run Living Historical Farm

Call 614.833.1880

E-Newsletter

Sign up from the home page at:
www.metroparks.net



Columbus and Franklin
County Metro Parks



CbusMetroParks



CbusMetroParks

Access all three from the Metro
Parks home page at

www.metroparks.net



Scan this QR Code to
download the loca-
tions map of all 16
Metro Parks to your
mobile device.

For information about Metro
Parks print or electronic publica-
tions contact Virginia Gordon
(vgordon@metroparks.net) or Peg
Hanley (hanley@metroparks.net)

Park and nature center hours for Winter 2011/12

Park

Battelle Darby Creek
Blacklick Woods
Blendon Woods
Highbanks
Scioto Audubon
Sharon Woods
Three Creeks

Hours

6:30am to 8pm

Chestnut Ridge

Clear Creek

Glacier Ridge

Heritage Trail

Pickerington Ponds

Prairie Oaks

Slate Run

6:30am to dark*

(* 1/2 hour after local sunset)

Inniswood Metro Gardens

7am to dark

Innis House is open Tuesday through
Friday, 8am to 4:30pm and Saturday and
Sunday 11am to 4pm

Slate Run Living Historical Farm

*In January and February some buildings
may be closed and activities are reduced,
but the grounds and barn are open. Call
614.833.1880 for more information.*

Wed-Sat, 9am to 4pm

Sun, 11am to 4pm

Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas

and New Year's Day

Nature Centers at

Blacklick Woods

Blendon Woods

Highbanks

Mon-Fri, noon to 5pm

Sat & Sun, 10am to 5pm

Closed Christmas Day

Walden Waterfowl Refuge

at Blendon Woods

Daily 6:30am to 8pm



Metro Five-0 for people age 50 and older

Metro Five-0 programs are color-coded by a level from one to four indicating the degree of intensity of the program.

LEVEL 1: Stationary. Move at your own pace

LEVEL 2: Less than 1 mile. Level terrain.
Slow pace

LEVEL 3: Up to 2 miles. Some hills or uneven terrain. Moderate pace

LEVEL 4: More than 2 miles. Some hills and/or uneven terrain. Strenuous pace

ADVANCE REGISTRATION

Programs with a phone symbol ☎ require advance registration. Go to the PROGRAM drop-down menu at www.metroparks.net or call 614.508.8111.

Registration begins Wednesday November 23.

Battelle Darby Creek

Meet at naturalist office unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

OWLS OF DARBY CREEK

03 Sat 5pm
Meet an owl from the Ohio Wildlife Center and attempt to call in one of these birds of prey on a short hike.
Pleasant Valley Bulletin Board, 9137 State Route 62

FAMILY HOLIDAY CRAFT

10 Sat 2–3:30pm
Make ornaments and crafts out of natural materials.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1

HOLIDAY CRAFT
10 Sat 4–5:30pm
Make ornaments and crafts out of natural materials.
Age 50 and older
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

FULL COLD MOON HIKE

10 Sat 5:30pm
Enjoy a fast-paced 4-mile walk through woods and prairies.

YOGA IN THE PARK

11 Sun 2pm
Learn basic yoga movements to rejuvenate your mind and body. Bring a mat or blanket.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

PRESCHOOLERS:

BEAR NECESSITIES
13 Tue 9:30 or 11am
Learn about these fierce creatures through storytelling, songs and a craft. Bring a teddy bear.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

PHOTO BASICS: WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

14 Wed 7pm
Learn techniques for capturing winter scenes.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

BISON

17 Sat 1pm
Enjoy a 2-mile hike to view North America's largest land mammal.

PRESCHOOLERS: BEAR NECESSITIES

30 Fri 11am or 1pm
See Dec 13

JANUARY

OFF-TRAIL HIKE

07 Sat 1pm
Lace up your boots for a 2-mile hike off the beaten path.
Pleasant Valley Bulletin Board, 9137 State Route 62

FULL ICE MOON

09 Mon 5:30pm
See Dec 10

PRESCHOOLERS: COYOTES

10 Tue 9:30 or 11am
Learn about these howling canines through story, song and craft. Howl for coyotes on a short hike.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

PHOTO BASICS: ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY

11 Wed 7pm
Hear about techniques for photographing the night sky.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

BIRDING AT BATTELLE

14 Sat 9am
Take a 2-mile walk and search for birds for your 2012 list.

OFF-TRAIL HIKE

15 Sun 1pm
Enjoy a 3-mile off-trail hike through prairies, forests and ravines.
Indian Ridge Bulletin Board

WHAT A HOOT

15 Sun 5:30pm
Try to lure in owls for a closer view on a 2-mile hike.
Indian Ridge Bulletin Board

YOGA IN THE PARK

21 Sat 1pm
See Dec 11

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

22 Sun 8:30am
Focus on black and white digital photography on a 2-mile hike along the Terrace Trail. Waterproof boots recommended.

PRESCHOOLERS: COYOTES

27 Fri 11am or 1pm
See Jan 10

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3

BISON
28 Sat 2pm
Enjoy a 2-mile hike to view North America's largest land mammal. Age 50 and older

FEBRUARY

MAMMALS OF OHIO DISPLAY

04 Sat 1-4pm
See skin, scat, skulls and skeletons of Ohio's past and present mammals.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

OWLS OF FEBRUARY

05 Sun 5:30pm
Try to lure in owls for a closer look.
Indian Ridge Bulletin Board

FULL SNOW MOON

07 Tue 6pm
See Dec 10

PHOTO BASICS: SUNSET PHOTOGRAPHY

08 Wed 7pm
Learn tips for capturing exciting sunset images.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

COYOTES

11 Sat 6pm
Try to entice these wary and wild canines using recordings and calls.

PRESCHOOLERS: EAGLES

14 Tue 9:30 or 11am
17 Fri 11am or 1pm
Learn about our national bird through story, song and craft.
Cedar Ridge Lodge &

BISON AT TWILIGHT

18 Sat 5:30pm
Enjoy a 2-mile hike to view North America's largest land mammal.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3 NIGHT HIKE

19 Sun 6pm
Enjoy a 2-mile hike through the Darby Creek Valley. Age 50 and older
Pleasant Valley Bulletin Board, 9137 State Route 62

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

25 Sat 10am
See the bison as you enjoy a 2-, 4- or 6-mile trek along the Greenway Trail.

SIGNS OF SPRING

26 Sun 1pm
Enjoy a 1-mile hike and search for plants and animals reawakening.



Karl Hassel

Blacklick Woods

Meet at nature center unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

HOLIDAY NATURE CRAFTS FOR KIDS

03 Sat 1–3pm
Enjoy a fun-filled afternoon of craft making.
Ages 3-12 &

LENS AND LEAVES CAMERA CLUB

08 Thu 7pm
Discover natural history and photographic techniques.
www.lensandleaves.org
Beech Maple Lodge &

METRO FIVE-0: Level 2 COLD MOON WALK

10 Sat 6pm
Enjoy a leisurely 1.5-mile woodland stroll. Age 50 and older
Ash Grove Picnic Area &

PRESCHOOLERS: DISCOVER THE SEASONS

14 Wed 10am
Learn about the four seasons through a craft and other fun activities.
Beech Maple Lodge &

WINTER TREES AND EVERGREENS

17 Sat 2pm
Discover the tricks to identify leafless trees and evergreens.
Ash Grove Picnic Area &

WILDLIFE OBSERVATION NIGHT

30 Fri 5–8pm
Look for nocturnal wildlife through the viewing windows. &

JANUARY

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

07 Sat 10am
Join us for a 2- or 4-mile walk through woods and

meadows. Hot beverages and a snack provided.
Ash Grove Picnic Area &

PRESCHOOLERS: THE BEECH TREE PUPPETS DISCOVER THE ICE AGE

11 Wed 10am
Go back in time with the Beech Tree Puppets as they meet some animals from the past.
Beech Maple Lodge &

LENS AND LEAVES CAMERA CLUB

12 Thu 7pm
See Dec 8

LET IT SNOW

14 Sat 2pm
Explore the world of snow (whether it snows outside or not) as you see snowflakes grow in a bottle and make paper snowflakes from natural materials. &

GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDKIDS: SCHOOL'S OUT

16 Mon 10am–noon
Bring your grandchildren to watch wildlife, sip a cup of hot chocolate and enjoy a mammal display. &

WILDLIFE OBSERVATION NIGHT

27 Fri 5–8pm
See Dec 30

FEBRUARY

OWLS

04 Sat 2pm
Take a daytime look for a nighttime animal on a 1.5-mile walk.
Ash Grove Picnic Area &

PRESCHOOLERS: TREES IN WINTER

08 Wed 10am
Learn about coniferous and deciduous trees with a story and a walk.
Beech Maple Lodge &

LENS AND LEAVES CAMERA CLUB

09 Thu 7pm
See Dec 8

BEAR CUB DAY: SHARING YOUR WORLD WITH WILDLIFE

11 Sat © 20736
Bear Cub Scouts (9 year olds) will participate in activities that meet requirements for the "Sharing Your World With Wildlife" achievement. &

HOMESCHOOLERS: WEATHER

21 Tue 10am
Discover how weather forecasting is done and build simple instruments to make your own forecasts. &

WILDLIFE OBSERVATION NIGHT

24 Fri 5–8pm
Look for nocturnal wildlife through the viewing windows. &



Wan Jung

White-breasted nuthatches frequently turn sideways or upside down as they forage for insects or seeds in the bark of tree trunks.

Blendon Woods

Meet at nature center unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

PHOTO PROWL

03 Sat 10am
Join other photographers and look for great shots along the trails.

FAMILY HIKE

03 Sat 1pm
Enjoy a 2-mile walk and admire the winter scenery.

AUDUBON BIRD HIKE

04 Sun 10am
Look for resident birds as you wander back to Thoreau Lake on a 2-mile hike.

ALMOST FULL MOON HIKE

09 Fri 6:30pm
Enjoy a 2-mile hike on the Sugarbush Trail.

COLD MOON MIGRATION

10 Sat 1pm
Check out recent waterfowl arrivals at Thoreau Lake and learn how ducks survive winter. &

OHIO MAMMALS

11 Sun 2pm
Test your knowledge of animals with a quiz and browse the collection of skins, skulls and scat. &

HOMESCHOOLERS: SURVIVING WINTER

14 Wed 1pm
Explore the four ways animals survive harsh winters and vote for your favorite. Age 6-12 &

PRESCHOOLERS: ANIMALS IN MOTION

15 Thu 10am or 1pm
Learn the honeybee dance and other animal movements. &

FAMILY NATURE CRAFTS

17 Sat 1-4pm
Make holiday presents using items found in nature. Bring additional natural materials to incorporate in your craft, such as leaves, nuts, seed pods etc. &

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1 CHRISTMAS FOR CRITTERS

18 Sun 2pm
Learn how to set out a banquet for your bird and mammal friends and help us decorate our outdoor feeding area. Age 50 and older &

FAMILY SCAVENGER HIKE

24 Sat 10am-4pm
26-30 Mon-Fri noon-1pm
31 Sat 10am-4pm
Look for nature clues and unusual objects along the trail using a scavenger hunt guide. Prizes available. &

JANUARY

AUDUBON NEW YEAR'S BIRD HIKE

01 Sun 8am
Start your 2012 Bird List on a 1.5-mile off-trail hike around Thoreau Lake.

FAMILY SCAVENGER HIKE

01 Sun 10am-4pm
See Dec 26

PHOTO PROWL

07 Sat 10am
See Dec 3

MIGRANT MOON

08 Sun 2pm
See what migrating waterfowl the Ice Moon has brought from Canada. &

ALMOST FULL MOON HIKE

08 Sun 6:30pm
Enjoy a 1.5-mile hike around Thoreau Lake.

HOMESCHOOLERS: SNOW SCIENCE

11 Wed 1pm
Take a close look at snow and ice (even if it doesn't snow outside). Age 6-12 &

JUST FOR KIDS: SNOW SCIENCE

14 Sat 1pm
Take a close look at snow and ice (even if it doesn't snow outside). Age 6-12 &

OWL PROWL

14 Sat 6:30pm
Take a 2-mile hike and search the woods for these birds of prey, using tape-recorded calls.

PRESCHOOLERS: SNOW TIME

19 Thu 10am or 1pm
Learn how to have fun in the snow and how animals survive winter.

SCOUT DAY: FROSTY FUN

21 Sat © 20701
Enjoy activities aimed at satisfying Junior Girl Scouts badge requirements.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3 DOWN THE RAVINE

28 Sat 1pm
Look for animal tracks on a 1.5-mile hike down a wild ravine. Age 50 and older

FEBRUARY

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

04 Sat 10am
Enjoy a 2-, 4- or 6-mile hike. Chicken noodle soup served. *Picnic Area Lot at Ranger Station*

AUDUBON BIRD HIKE

05 Sun 10am
Take a 2-mile hike and search for resident birds and wintering waterfowl. Binoculars recommended.

HOMESCHOOLERS: MOUSE MULTIPLICATION

08 Wed 1pm
Learn about population explosions and nature's need for predators by building model mouse colonies with breakfast cereal—and enjoy eating your prey. &

JUST FOR KIDS: MOUSE MULTIPLICATION

11 Sat 1pm
Learn about population explosions and nature's need for predators by building model mouse colonies with breakfast cereal—and enjoy eating your prey. &

FAMILY HIKE: DOWN A RAVINE

12 Sun 2pm
Explore a wild ravine on a 1.5-mile off-trail hike.

PRESCHOOLERS: BEAR NECESSITIES

16 Thu 10am or 1pm
18 Sat 1pm
Learn about these fierce creatures. Teddy bears welcome. &

SPINNING TOWARD SPRING

19 Sun 2pm
Learn how the Earth's seasons influence the weather, wildlife and plants. &

FAMILY HIKE AND CAMPFIRE

25 Sat 2pm
Hike the 2-mile Sugarbush Trail and cook food at the campfire.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 2 THOREAU LAKE HIKE

26 Sun 2pm
Take a 1.5-mile hike around the lake to look for migrating ducks. Age 50 and older

Chestnut Ridge

Meet at Springhouse Program Area unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

MAKE YOUR OWN WINTER HIKE WALKING STICK

03 Sat 11am
Make your own walking stick. Bring your own pocket knife. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult &

FAMILY FUN NIGHT HIKE & CAMPFIRE

30 Fri 5pm
Take a 1.4-mile hike and enjoy a campfire. Bring food to roast.

JANUARY

TREES WITHOUT LEAVES

07 Sat 1pm
Learn basic winter tree identification on a 1.4-mile hike through the woods.

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

22 Sun 2pm
Enjoy a 1.4- or 2-mile self-guided hike, followed by hot drinks and food.

KIDS IN THE WOODS: WINTER FUN SURVIVAL BASICS

29 Sun 2pm
Learn how to build a temporary shelter and start a fire.



FEBRUARY

RANGER STATION WILDLIFE DISPLAY

26 Sun 2–4pm
Enjoy a hot drink and see mammals, birds of prey and cold-blooded critters on display. *Ranger Station* &

Clear Creek

DECEMBER

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3 BACKCOUNTRY HIKE

09 Fri 10am
Take a 2-mile hike to Memory Rock to learn about evergreen plants and see a spectacular view of Clear Creek Valley. Age 50 and older *Creekside Meadows Parking Lot*

LOOKING FOR A CHALLENGING HIKE? TRAIN WITH JOHN

10 Sat @ 21036
Join Metro Parks Director John O'Meara as he trains to climb Mount Everest. His heavy pack will slow him a little, but this will be a fast-paced, strenuous 15-mile hike in steep terrain.

EVERGREEN WREATH MAKING

10 Sat 2pm
Learn how to make wreaths out of natural materials. *Maintenance Shop, 9935 Opposum Hollow Road*

JANUARY

NEW YEAR'S DAY BACKCOUNTRY HIKE

01 Sun 1pm
Start the New Year off right with a rugged 3-mile hike to a scenic sandstone gorge. *Park Office*

LOOKING FOR A CHALLENGING HIKE? TRAIN WITH JOHN

14 Sat @ 21037
Join Metro Parks Director John O'Meara as he trains to climb Mount Everest. His heavy pack will slow him a little, but this will be a fast-paced, strenuous 15-mile hike in steep terrain.

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

28 Sat 10am
Enjoy a 1-, 2-, 3-, 5- or 7-mile guided or self-guided hike. *Mathias Log Cabin*

FEBRUARY

METRO FIVE-0: Level 4 HIKE THE HEMLOCK TRAIL

04 Sat 10am
Take a 3-mile hike on one of the park's most rugged trails and along the creek. Age 50 and older *Fern Parking Lot*

LOOKING FOR A CHALLENGING HIKE? TRAIN WITH JOHN

11 Sat @ 21038
Join Metro Parks Director

John O'Meara as he trains to climb Mount Everest. His heavy pack will slow him a little, but this will be a fast-paced, strenuous 15-mile hike in steep terrain.

OWLS

25 Sat 6pm
Learn about these birds of prey and watch and listen for them in Neotoma Valley. *Mathias Log Cabin*



Hemlocks and a spectacular ice shelf in the gorge at Clear Creek.

Andrew Boose

Glacier Ridge

Meet at main entrance picnic area bulletin board

DECEMBER

FAMILY WINTER WALK

04 Sun 2pm

Look for signs of wildlife on a 1-mile walk through fields and forest.

OWLS

11 Sun 5pm

Meet live owls from Ohio Wildlife Center before heading out on the trail to look for the park's barred owl. *Maintenance Shop* &

WINTER WALK AND WOOF

31 Sat 2pm

Enjoy a 2.5-mile hike with your dog through fields and forest. (Flashlight recommended) &

JANUARY

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

02 Mon 8am

Join the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count and search for birds on- and off-trail. *Maintenance Shop*

NATURE FOR KIDS: MAMMAL DISPLAY

22 Sun 2–4pm

Touch animal pelts and skulls and make a wildlife tracking scarf to take home. *Maintenance Shop* &

RAPTOR HIKE

29 Sun 2pm

Search for owls and hawks on a 1.5-mile hike. &

FEBRUARY

OWLS

04 Sat 6pm

Listen for the calls of a barred owl on a 1-mile hike.

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

12 Sun 2pm

Enjoy a brisk 2-mile hike through grasslands and forest. &

WINTER WALK AND WOOF

24 Fri 6:30pm

See Dec 31

Highbanks

Meet at nature center unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

WHO HOOTS FOR YOU

04 Sun 6pm

Try to lure in owls for a closer look.

HOWL AT THE MOON

09 Fri 5pm

Enjoy a 3.5-mile walk with your dog

CANINE ANTICS

11 Sun 1–3pm

Learn about wolves, coyotes and foxes at our display featuring skins, skulls and scat of these wild canines. &

PRESCHOOLERS:

MAMMALS IN WINTER

13 Tue @ 20747 / 20748

14 Wed @ 20749 / 20750

Learn how mammals stay warm in the bitter cold of winter. &

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

17 Sat 8am

Join us for the National Audubon Christmas Bird Count and search on- and off-trail for birds. Afterward, we'll sip hot chocolate and tally our results.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3

WINTER SOLSTICE WALK

22 Thu 5pm

Enjoy a brisk 2-mile walk, with lanterns to light our way, on the longest night of the year. Age 50 and older

NATURAL PLAY AREA: SCAVENGER HUNT

30 Fri noon

Take a scavenger hunt through the Natural Play Area and enjoy a cup of hot chocolate. *Big Meadows Picnic Area*

JANUARY

ANIMAL TRACKS

08 Sun 1–3pm

Learn how to read the landscape from tracks, scat

and other visible signs while making an animal track to take home. &

HOWL AT THE MOON

08 Sun 5pm

Enjoy a 3.5-mile hike with your dog.

PRESCHOOLERS:

WINTER WONDERLAND

10 Tue @ 20756 / 20757

11 Wed @ 20758 / 20759

Take a look at snowflakes and other winter wonders. &

WHO HOOTS FOR YOU

14 Sat 6pm

Try to lure in owls for a closer look.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1 STONE SOUP

18 Wed @ 20762

Learn the story of "Stone Soup" and how it inspired a community to come together in friendship and help make soup of our own. Bring a can of vegetables and a story to share. &

CABIN FEVER?

22 Sun 1pm

Break out of your winter routine on a 2.5-mile hike.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1 MORNING MOVIE

27 Fri 10:30am–noon

Enjoy the movie "Earth," narrated by James Earl Jones and featuring the amazing journeys of three animal families across our planet. Age 50 and older &

FEBRUARY

HOWL AT THE MOON

06 Mon 5pm

Enjoy a 3.5-mile walk with your dog.

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

11 Sat 10am

Enjoy a 2.5- or 5-mile hike, followed by refreshments. *Northern Reservable Shelter and Nature Center*

BIRDBATHS AND FEEDERS

12 Sun ☉ 20771
Make a tin birdbath that will stay ice free through winter and suet treats for songbirds. ☼

PRESCHOOLERS: A CAT BY ANY OTHER NAME

14 Tue 9:30 or 11am
15 Wed 11am or 1pm
Learn about skunks (sometimes called polecats) through story, song and craft. ☼

MAMMALS OF THE ICE AGE

18 Sat 2pm
Join Dale Gnidovec, curator of the Ohio State University's Orton Geological Museum as he reviews animal life in Ice Age Ohio. ☼

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3 WARM & TOASTY HIKE

18 Sat 5pm
Join us for an invigorating 2-mile hike with lanterns. Age 50 and older

NAKED TREES

26 Sun 1–3pm
Learn the bare basics on identifying trees in winter. ☼

Educator Workshops at Highbanks

Formal and non-formal educators will experience activities to use in their classroom to help meet current science standards. Background information and resources will be provided. College credit is available for an additional fee. Contact Elizabeth Fields at fields@metroparks.net or call 614.846.9962 for more information. *(Also, see the Educator Workshop: Science Through Stories at Sharon Woods on Sat February 4 -page 28)*

PROJECT LEARNING TREE: SECONDARY MODULES

Sat Dec 3 ☉ 20775
PLT is an interdisciplinary approach to understanding trees, forests, and woodland habitats. Educators will learn to guide students on how to think about complex environmental issues. Topics discussed will include: the careful use of natural resources, risk assessment and waste reduction and disposal. \$10 ☼

WILD ABOUT RESOURCES

Sat Jan 21 ☉ 20776
Various interdisciplinary hands-on activities will help educators to understand the interdependence of wildlife, ecosystems and human activities and their impact on the environment. Sources for these and related activities will be discussed. \$15 ☼

PROJECT WET: GENERATION 2.0

Sat Feb 25 ☉ 20777
Follow the Project Wet resource guide containing teacher-tested and classroom-ready interdisciplinary activities developed to engage students in a better understanding of water as a resource, a habitat and a source of life. \$25 *(includes a copy of the new edition of Project WET: Water Education for teachers)* ☼

Inniswood

Meet at Innis House unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

MEET THE ARTIST

04 Sun 2–4pm
Meet December's artist of the month, Georgie Cline, and view her fiber artwork. ☼

PRESCHOOL IN THE GARDEN: SNOW IN THE GARDENS

07 Wed
☉ 20637 / 20638 / 20639
Learn about snow and its effect on the gardens and wildlife. Make a snow gauge to take home.

GARDEN ADVENTURERS: SNOW IN THE GARDENS

11 Sun ☉ 20640
See Dec 7

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

17 Sat 8am
Search for birds and help collect data for the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count.
Gardens Entrance

SOLSTICE SUNDAY

18 Sun 5–7pm
Celebrate the winter solstice and learn about this astronomical and cultural event with Tom Burns, Director of Perkins Observatory, and listen to music by Suzuki Music Columbus. View the night sky through telescopes (weather permitting). ☼

JANUARY

PRESCHOOL IN THE GARDEN: WINTER WILDLIFE

04 Wed
☉ 20643 / 20644 / 20645
Look for evidence of life in the garden and warm up inside while making a craft.

GARDEN ADVENTURERS: WINTER WILDLIFE

08 Sun ☉ 20646
Look for evidence of life in the garden and warm up inside while making a craft. Age 6–9



Bryan Knowles

The Country Garden is one of seven featured in the Sisters' Garden.

COOKING WITH HERBS

11 Wed 7pm

Join the Herb Society of America, Central Ohio Unit for their quarterly meeting. Learn tips and tricks to use culinary herbs creatively. Demonstration by Adrienne Novack, Chef, Rocky Fork Country Club. Open to the public.

WILD ONES: GOT WATER, WANT WATER

14 Sat 10am

Stephanie Suter, Habitat Conservationist with Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District, discusses creating habitats in bogs and through water harvesting. &

MEET THE ARTIST

15 Sun 2–4pm

Meet Lynn Carty and Norm Woerhly, January's artists of the month, and view their acrylic and pastel paintings. &

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

22 Sun 2pm

Join us for a guided 2-mile hike along the trails and garden paths. *Gardens Entrance*

ANNUAL QUILT SHOW

28–29 Sat–Sun

11am–4pm

31 Tue 8am–4:30pm
View quilts made by members of the Columbus Metropolitan Quilters. Members will be available to answer questions Saturday and Sunday. &

METRO FIVE-0: Level 2

WINTER TREE ID

29 Sun 2pm

Take a walk with a horticulturist and learn how to identify trees by bark, buds and twigs. Age 50 and older *Gardens Entrance*

FEBRUARY

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

All month

View the oil, watercolor, and charcoal artwork of Leonzo Clyde (L.C.) Waltz.

ANNUAL QUILT SHOW

01–03 Wed–Fri

8am–4:30pm

04–05 Sat–Sun

11am–4pm

View quilts made by members of the Columbus Metropolitan Quilters. Members will be available to answer questions Saturday and Sunday.

PRESCHOOL IN THE GARDEN: BECOME A WILDLIFE FRIEND

08 Wed

© 20660 / 20661 / 20662

Make a bird feeder and plant a tree seed to take home to attract wildlife to your backyard.

WILD ONES: BACK TO BASICS PRUNING

11 Sat 10am

Ohio State University horticulturist Sharon Treaster discusses the use of pruning tools, removing branches and selective pruning techniques.

WINTER WILDLIFE WALK

11 Sat 2pm

Enjoy a guided walk as you search for and learn about garden wildlife.

Gardens Entrance

GARDEN ADVENTURERS: BECOME A WILDLIFE FRIEND

12 Sun © 20665

Make a bird feeder and plant a tree seed to take home to attract wildlife to your backyard. Age 6–9

GARDENING INSIGHTS SERIES

18 Sat 9:30am–noon

Creating a Tree Legacy

- Mary Maloney, Director of OSU Chadwick Arboretum & Learning Gardens, discusses the attributes of great trees for your landscape in Central Ohio.

Banish Winter Blahs

- Join local garden writer, Michael Leach, for this interactive program on how to add some pizzaz to your winter landscape. Bring a photograph of your yard or garden that you see most frequently from inside.

25 Sat 9:30am–noon

Rock Star Plants - Well-known horticulturist and author, Tracy DiSabato-Aust

shares her favorite annual, perennial, and woody divas and rockers that will shake, rattle and roll your garden! Sponsored by Inniswood Garden Society. To register, call 614.895.6216.

Fee (for one session):

\$15/IGS members,
\$25/non-members.

Fee (for both sessions):

\$25/IGS members,
\$35/non-members.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 2 WALK AND TALK

21 Tue 11am

Search for signs of spring as you walk the Inniswood trails and discuss maintenance tasks to help wake up your garden. Age 50 and older *Gardens Entrance* &



Pine trees frame a winter scene in the Woodland Rock Garden.

Bryan Knowles

Pickerington Ponds

Meet at Glacier Knoll Picnic Area unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

WINTER BIRDS

03 Sat 9:30am
Search for birds on a 1-mile walk on- and off-trail.

BACKCOUNTRY WANDERING

04 Sun 2pm
Search for wildlife on a 2-mile off-trail hike.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3 WILDLIFE WALK

09 Fri 9:30am
Take a 2-mile walk and discover the ways wildlife adapt to and survive winter. Age 50 and older

JANUARY

WINTER WONDERS

07 Sat 2pm
Take a 2-mile walk and discover how plants and animals survive in cold and snow.

HARRIER HIKE

08 Sun 2pm
Look for northern harriers and other birds of prey on a 2-mile walk along grasslands and wetlands.

OFF-TRAIL EXPLORATION

29 Sun 2pm
Search for signs of wildlife on a 2-mile hike.

FEBRUARY

EARLY BIRDS

25 Sat 2pm
Search for and learn to identify kinds of ducks, geese and other birds using spotting scopes and binoculars.

CALLING ALL COYOTES

25 Sat 6pm
Call coyotes with howls on a 2-mile walk. Learn how these wild canines have adapted to living close to people and ways in which we can live with them.

OWL AFTERNOON

26 Sun 2pm
Search for great horned owls on a 1.5-mile off-trail prowl through the woods. *Ellis Pond Viewing Area*



Kim Graham

Prairie Oaks

Meet at Darby Bend Lakes unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

WINTER NATURE HUNT

31 Sat 1pm
Enjoy a scavenger hunt with the naturalist and warm up next to the campfire with cookies and cocoa. *Whispering Oaks Picnic Area, 3225 Plain City-Georgesville Rd*



Sycamores, cottonwoods and silver maples line Big Darby Creek.

Mike Featherolf

JANUARY

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

15 Sun 2pm
Enjoy a 1-, 3- or 5-mile hike around the lakes and along the banks of Big Darby Creek.

FEED THE BIRDS

21 Sat 10:30am
Bring a recycled container to make a birdfeeder to feed birds in your yard. *Hurt/ Battelle Memorial Library, 270 Lilly Chapel Road, West Jefferson &*

FEBRUARY

OWL PROWL

17 Fri 6:30pm
Search for these birds of prey on a 1-mile hike around the lake. *Beaver Lake, 8921 Lucas Road*

HARRIER HIKE

18 Sat 4pm
Look for northern harriers on a hike through the prairie. *Prairie View Picnic Area, 3225 Plain City-Georgesville Road*

SKUNK CABBAGE SEARCH

25 Sat 1pm
Look for the first wildflower of spring on a 1-mile off-trail hike. *Prairie View Picnic Area, 3225 Plain City-Georgesville Road*



Sharon Woods

DECEMBER

ADULT FULL MOON HIKE

10 Sat 5–6:15pm
Take a fast-paced 2.8-mile hike along gravel, paved and natural surface trails.
Apple Ridge Bulletin Board

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1 INTRO TO BIRD ID

12 Mon 10am
Enjoy an introduction to birding in Central Ohio. Age 50 and older
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. ☎*

AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

17 Sat 10am
Search for birds on- and off-trail for the annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count. Enjoy snacks and hot cocoa as we tally our results.
Schrock Lake Restrooms

PRESCHOOLERS PLUS: OPEN HOUSE

28 Wed 10am–2pm
Join us from 10–11am for a concert by Joanie Calem followed by crafts and fun activities. Age 3–7
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. ☎*

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

28 Wed ☎ 20601
Leave the kids with us for winter fun and games. S'mores and hot cocoa provided. Age 6–9

JANUARY

ADULT FULL MOON HIKE

09 Mon 5:45–7pm
See Dec 10

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

14 Sat 10am
Enjoy a 1.5- or 3.5-mile guided or self-guided hike through the fields and for-



Bryan Knowles

It's easy to follow the park's trail maps with a good back-seat driver—even if the map is upside down.

ests and a cup of hot soup and drinks.
Apple Ridge Picnic Shelter

HOMESCHOOLERS: DEAR DEER

18 Wed ☎ 20579 / 20580
Join us for activities about Ohio's state mammal, the white-tailed deer. Age 6 and older

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1 BIRD FEEDING ADVENTURES

20 Fri 7pm
Join Tom Sheley of Columbus Audubon for a discussion on feeding and watching birds in winter. Age 50 and older
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. ☎*

PRESCHOOLERS: WINTER IN THE WOODS

24 Tue 9:30 or 11am or 1pm
Join the Discovery Forest puppets for the children's winter storybook "A Stranger in the Woods." *Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. ☎*

NATURAL PLAY AREA ADVENTURES: CRITTER HUNT

29 Sun 2pm
Use GPS units to locate critters hidden in the woods. Limited number of GPS units available.
Apple Ridge Bulletin Board

FEBRUARY

EDUCATOR WORKSHOP: SCIENCE THROUGH STORIES

04 Sat ☎ 20622
Learn how to use literature as a basis for exploring and explaining environmental topics. Receive a bibliography of environmental-related stories. Correlations will be made between science and language arts. Content standards for grades K-5. Fee \$20. College credit is available with participation in one other Educator Workshop and for an additional fee. (see page 25)
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. ☎*

METRO FIVE-0: Level 2 BIRD WALK

05 Sun 2pm
Look for birds on a gentle 1-mile walk through the Edward S. Thomas Nature Preserve. Beginner and advanced birders welcome. Age 50 and older
Schrock Lake Restrooms

ADULT FULL MOON HIKE

07 Tue 6:15–7:30pm
See Dec 10

HOMESCHOOLERS: BIRD BRAINS

14 Tue ☎ 20581 / 20582
Learn about our feathered friends through activities. Age 6 and older

VALENTINE'S DAY IS FOR THE BIRDS... AND BEES

14 Tue 7pm
Learn about love in the animal kingdom and enjoy romantic refreshments. For adults only
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. ☎*

GIRLS' CAMP-IN

17 Fri © 20515
Join us for an overnight indoor camping adventure. We'll make crafts, play games and take a 1-mile hike. Girls grades 4-6 only

SKUNK CABBAGE RAMBLE

20 Mon 1pm
Take a short off-trail stroll to search for this aromatic wildflower and warm up with a cup of cocoa.
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St.*

PRESCHOOLERS: THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

23 Thu
© 20619 / 20620 / 20621
Enjoy a story, craft and song about the night sky.
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. &*

COOL PLANETS AND HOT COCOA

24 Fri 7:30pm
Grab a cup of cocoa and

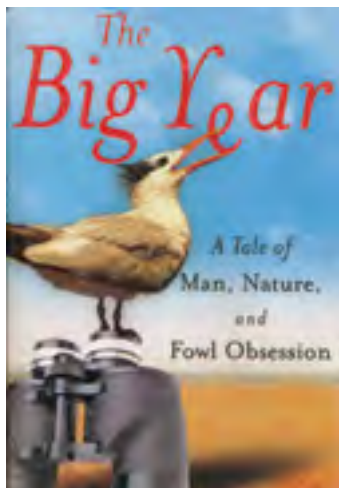
join volunteer astronomer Jay Young for an indoor talk and outdoor observation of planets and stars.
*Spring Hollow Lodge,
1069 W. Main St. &*

**METRO FIVE-0: Level 1
BOOK TALK**
29 Wed 11am-noon
See box &

LEAPIN' LANTERNS
29 Wed 6:45pm
Candle lanterns will light the way along a 1-mile walk.
Schrock Lake Restrooms

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1 — BOOK TALK

Wed Feb 29 11am-noon



Join us for an engaging discussion of the best seller, and recent theatrical release, "The Big Year" by journalist Mark Obmascik. Available at area libraries, this entertaining book features the adventures of three avid bird watchers who compete to spot the rarest birds in North America at a prestigious annual event. Please try to read the book before the program.

Age 50 and older

Spring Hollow Lodge, 1069 W. Main St. &

Slate Run

Meet at Buzzard's Roost Picnic Area unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

COYOTE PROWL

03 Sat 5:30pm
Learn about coyotes and take a 1.5-mile walk to try to hear them howling.

SILENT NIGHT

10 Sat 5:30pm
All is calm and all is bright as you take a 1-mile walk under the full moon's light.

PINECONE CRAFTS

11 Sun 2pm
Take a half-mile walk through the woods to search for pinecones and make holiday crafts with your findings.
Naturalist Office

JANUARY

LANTERN-LIT WALK

07 Sat 6pm
Enjoy a brisk 1-mile walk through the covered bridge.

WINTER SPORTS SAMPLER

08 Sun 2pm
Volunteers from Columbus Outdoor Pursuits will have cross-country skis and snowshoes for you to try. Even if there is no snow you can learn about these winter sports and how to pick the right gear for you.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3

HARRIER HIKE

14 Sat 2pm
Look for northern harriers and other wildlife during a 1.5-mile walk. Age 50 and older
Slate Run Wetlands

WILDLIFE SIGNS

22 Sun 2pm
Look for animal tracks on a 1.5-mile hike.
Shady Grove Program Area

FEBRUARY

OWL HIKE

11 Sat 6:30pm
Take a 1-mile walk and try to call in barred owls.

NATURAL PLAY AREA ADVENTURE: WINTER FORTS

12 Sun 1pm
Visit the Natural Play Area and learn to build structures to keep you warm in winter.
Shady Grove Program Area

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

19 Sun 2pm
Take a 2.5- or 5-mile self-guided hike through woods and fields. Soup and snacks served.

METRO FIVE-0: Level 2 IT'S MAPLE SYRUP TIME

25 Sat noon
Learn to identify sugar maple trees, tap trees and help collect sap to be made into syrup. Visit the Historical Farm afterward for samples and to see sap boiling. Age 50 and older

Slate Run Living Historical Farm

Call 614.833.1880 for information.

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

03 Sat 1–3pm
Help deck the farmhouse for the Christmas season in Victorian fashion. String popcorn, make an ornament to take home and decorate the tree. &

FILLING THE FARM LARDER

10 Sat 10am–2pm
Hog butchering is a seasonal activity providing meat for the coming year. Watch the farmers clean and prepare the hog carcass.

11 Sun 11am–2pm
Watch the farmers cut meat, make sausage and render lard.

PRESCHOOLERS AT THE FARM: GINGERBREAD TREATS

15 Thu 10am
Decorate a cookie and learn about the holiday tradition of gingerbread with a story and a craft. &

HOMESCHOOLERS AT THE FARM: A GINGERBREAD JOURNEY

15 Thu 1pm
Follow the trail of gingerbread through cultures and time to learn how it became a holiday favorite. &

'TIS THE SEASON

17 Sat 1–3pm
18 Sun 1–3pm
Take a break from the holiday bustle with a quiet stroll around the farm. String popcorn and make an ornament for your tree.

A CHRISTMAS EVENING

17 Sat 4–5:30pm
Make decorations, string popcorn and enjoy other 1880s holiday activities on a special lamplit evening.

HOLIDAY BREAK WORKDAY

29 Thu 1–3pm
Help with farm chores, visit with the animals and stop by the farmhouse for activities and to warm up next to the woodstove.

SMOKED, SALTED, PICKLED AND PRESERVED

31 Sat 1–3pm
Learn how fruits, vegetables and meats were preserved in the days before artificial refrigeration. The smokehouse will be operating today.

FEBRUARY

MAPLE SYRUP HIKES

25 Sat 1–3pm
26 Sun 1–3pm
Sample this sweet treat and learn about making maple syrup the 1880s way. A short hike to the sugarbush leaves the farm at 1 and 2pm.

Sap collecting and boiling is dependent on the weather. All other activities take place whether sap is flowing or not. Call 614.833.1880 to check if sap is flowing.



David Jolley

The fully restored farmhouse was built in the Gothic Revival style by Isaac Fridley in 1856. The groundfloor rooms are open free to the public.

Three Creeks

Meet at Confluence Trails Bulletin Board unless otherwise noted

DECEMBER

WINTER PUPPET SHOW

08 Thu 1pm
Watch the puppet animals get ready for winter.
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport &

NATURAL PLAY AREA ADVENTURES

17 Sat 11am
Play games and look for wildlife living in the pine forest as you explore the Natural Play Area.

EAGLE WATCH

18 Sun 1pm
Take a rugged, 2-mile off-trail hike to see if the eagles are sprucing up their nest for the upcoming mating season.

SNOW FUN

27 Tue 10am
With or without snow, enjoy snow day fun with games, stories and crafts.
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport &

JANUARY

SCIENCE FRIDAY FUN

06 Fri 1pm
Experiment with plants to see how they use solar energy and carbon dioxide, then build your own mini-habitat to watch a flower grow. Bring two clean, clear 2-liter bottles.
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport &

HOWL AT THE MOON

10 Tue 6:30pm
Enjoy a 3-mile walk with your dog to learn about the moon's phases, legends and lore. &

WINTER BREAK

16 Mon 11am
Learn how animals survive winter as you play games, read stories and look at animal furs.
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport &

METRO FIVE-0: Level 3 WINTER WOODS WALK

20 Fri 1pm
Hike 2-miles and search the woods for tracks and signs of animal life.
Age 50 and older

PRESCHOOLERS: HOOT!

23 Mon 2pm
See owl mounts up close and learn about these birds of prey through a story and craft.
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport &

OWL HIKE

29 Sun 6pm
Use recordings and calls to look and listen for some of the three species of owls that live in the park. &

FEBRUARY

PRESCHOOLERS: BEARS

07 Tue 10am
Learn about these creatures through stories and activities. Teddy bears welcome.
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport

CAMPFIRE COOKING

12 Sun 6pm
Sample some fire-side treats and learn some easy recipes to use at your next campfire. &

METRO FIVE-0: Level 1 LOVE IS IN THE AIR

14 Tue 2pm
Discover what nature's sweethearts are doing to keep warm in the cold season. Age 50 and older
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport &

39TH ANNUAL WINTER HIKE SERIES

18 Sat 10am
Hike 1, 3 or 5.6 miles along the creeks. Guided and self-guided hikes offered. Soup and hot beverages served after the hike. Dogs welcome on the 1- or 5.6-mile hikes.

HOWL AT NO MOON

19 Sun 6:30pm
Bring your dog for a 3-mile walk and look for nocturnal animals. &

CAPTIVATING CANINES

22 Wed 6:30pm
Learn about foxes, coyotes and wolves and use calls to listen for some of these wild critters on a short hike.
Heritage Nature Center, 551 Wirt Road, Groveport &

Walnut Woods

DECEMBER

OWL PROWL

18 Sun 5pm
Look and listen for owls nesting in the newest Metro Park as you take a 1-mile hike.
Tall Pines Area, 6833 Richardson Road, Groveport &

JANUARY

WINTER WANDERING

22 Sun 2pm
Explore the fields and forests and look for wildlife on a 2-mile walk.
Park Office, 6723 Lithopolis Road, Groveport

FEBRUARY

TALL PINE WALK

26 Sun 4pm
Explore the features of the newest Metro Park on a 2.5-mile walk.
Tall Pines Area, 6833 Richardson Road, Groveport &



Parkscope

Showcasing the best photography
from your Metro Parks

Metro Parks Album

Clockwise from left:

Downy woodpecker at Blacklick Woods, by Ralf Niehaus; Frost covered blackberry leaves, by Andrew Boose; Ring-necked pheasant, by Tim Daniel; Red fox in snow at Sharon Woods, by John Watts.

