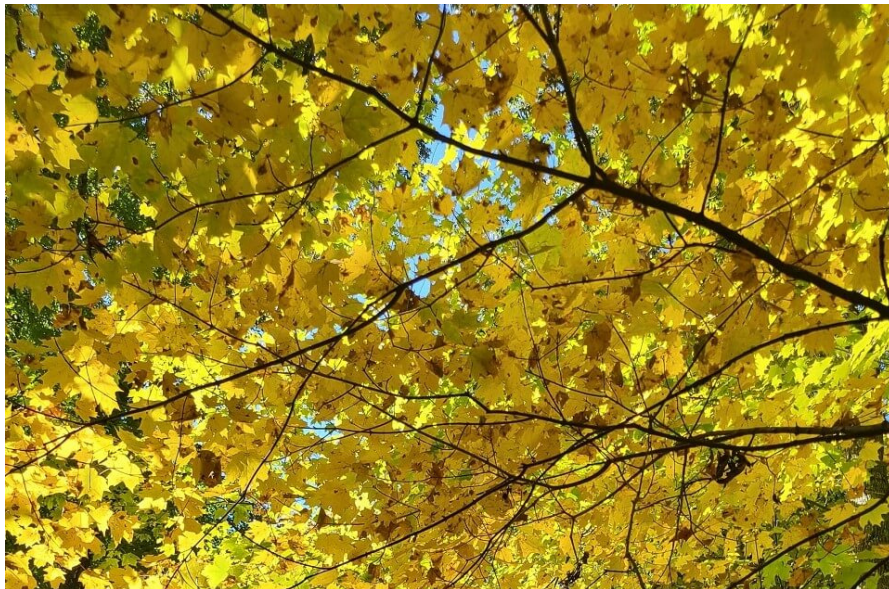


From Clermont County Park District <parkdistrict@clermontcountyohio.gov>
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November 2022



Naturalist Notes

Our naturalist programs are winding down for the winter and this is the last weekend to visit the Chilo Lock #34 River History Museum before we close for the season. However, we have a couple series starting this November, Evening Lectures and Forest Expedition Hikes! We're very excited to launch our Evening Lecture Series with Greg Torres from Cincinnati Parks and the Nature Guys podcast. He'll be presenting "Planting for Birds" on Wednesday November 9th at 6:30 p.m. Come mingle, share some refreshments and learn!

Fall Color

Erin Talley

It's that time of year where all the leaves have almost all changed colors and fallen down. It has been a spectacular season with some vibrant colors. But what causes the leaves to change colors? Many of us might

think the leaves change when the temperature does, but it's actually the change in daylight. When the days become shorter, the trees suck up excess nutrients from the leaves causing the chlorophyll to die off. Chlorophyll is what makes the leaves green and does photosynthesis. As the chlorophyll dies off, the yellow and orange colors of the leaves begin to show. These are pigments that are always in the leaves, but are not as abundant or productive as the chlorophyll is. They still conduct photosynthesis, but not as much while they are still attached to the tree.

But where do the beautiful red and violet colors come from? If there is still a lot of nutrients in the leaves when they change color and there is a lot of sunlight reaching the leaves, the sugars will mix with the yellow and orange pigments in the leaves to make that stunning red color. This will stop the leaf from absorbing too much light and damaging the tree since plants absorb red and blue light the most. Think of it like sunblock for leaves.

At the end of the season, many of the leaves turn brown and that is the complete absence of pigments. That brown color comes from the tannins in the leaves. Tannins make the leaves taste bad to prevent predation, and help regulate plant growth in the rest of the tree.



Management Moment

Prairie Management

Cory Snider

That weedy, undesirable, ugly looking field you drive past work today is actually one of the most important habitats in North America. Native grasslands used to stretch all across the United States, largely in the Midwest. The grasslands are the reason why the Midwest is such an agricultural powerhouse. Grasslands provide many benefits; wildlife habitat. pollinator opportunities. forage. brood habitat. water filtration.

erosion control, slows water runoff, and many more. Grasslands or prairies are a great property feature especially with the addition of native wildflowers. However, how does one manage grassland habitat?

Many different management practices can be beneficial to grassland ecosystems. Prescribed burning, herbicide use, grazing and mowing are amongst the most used practices. Prescribed burns have many benefits but can be dangerous and require a crew and equipment. Herbicide spraying can be effective if done correctly but some people will shy away from herbicides because of the health aspect and financial cost for chemical and equipment. Mowing seems to be the most inexpensive practice to use being that most landowners have or know someone that has a mower/tractor.

To make it brief, mowing is great to set succession of your grassland/prairie back, keeping woody species out, and helping stimulate growth of native grasses. Rotational mowing which is essentially mowing 25-50% of the habitat in strip patterns or block patterns is the most commonly used mowing practiced amongst habitat managers. This allows sections to be mowed while allowing unmowed sections to stand as cover for wildlife. It also helps unnerve the public by not completely mowing/ "destroying" the habitat. Rotational strips or blocks should be mowed every 2-3 years. Some may suggest a 25% rotational mow in a 4-year span once the grassland has had a few years of intense management. Note the time of year you mow is very important for wildlife.

Below are two attached links from government agencies on grassland management:

<https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/HabitatManagement/pages/mowingandwildlife.aspx>

<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/publications/environment-natural-resources/prairie-reconstruction-guidebook-for-north-dakota#section-7>



Park Update

Work Beginning on Ten Mile Creek Preserve

Chris Clingman

Trail construction is starting at Ten Mile Creek Preserve in Pierce Township. The Park District acquired the property in 2014, partnering with the Clermont County Commissioners using a Clean Ohio Fund grant to make the purchase. The Commissioners provided the required local match to the grant. They were interested in preserving the property as a way to help protect the County's drinking water well field. The well field is located just downstream of the preserve along the Ohio River. Many Clermont County residents may remember the preserve as the former Sky Valley Swim and Golf Club.

The Park District received a second Clean Ohio Fund grant to improve access to the preserve. The improvements will include a new parking area and mile long gravel loop trail to provide year round hiking opportunities. The preserve often undergoes backwater flooding from the Ohio River causing the grass trails to remain soggy for weeks. The gravel trails will let hikers enjoy the property as soon as the floodwater recedes.

Future work at the preserve will involve converting the golf course into a native meadow by removing invasive plants and planting native wildflowers and grasses. This will create better habitat for pollinators and grassland birds. Watch for Monarchs, Tiger Swallowtails, Bluebirds, Field Sparrows, and hopefully Bobolinks!

Construction is weather dependent, but the hope is that the access improvement project can be completed before the end of the year.

NOVEMBER PROGRAMS AND EVENTS						
Business Office: 8 am to 4:30 pm Monday-Friday						
River History Museum: Closed November through March						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1 10 am Knee-High Naturalist: Turkeys at Sycamore Park	2	3	4 1 pm Nature Play Days at Sycamore Park	5 1 pm Forest Expedition at Sycamore Park
6	7	8 9:30 am Walk and Talk at the Hike-Bike Trail 10 am Knee-High Naturalist: Turkeys at Shor Park	9	10 12 pm Park Board meeting at Pattison Headquarters	11	12 1 pm Nature Play Days at Sycamore Park
13	14	15	16	17	18 1 pm Nature Play Days at Sycamore Park	19 9 am Conservation Work Day at Pattison Park Lakeside *pre-registration required*
20	21	22	23	24 <i>Administrative Office Closed for Thanksgiving</i>	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	2

Upcoming Programs and Events

Knee-High Naturalist: Turkeys

Tuesday Nov 1, 10 a.m. at Sycamore Park
Tuesday Nov 8, 10 a.m. at Shor Park

Get outside and explore nature with your 3-5 year old at our parks. This month's theme is bats! Read a book, make a craft, and have a mini adventure. Dress for the weather! Free, no registration required.

Forest Expedition

Sycamore Park
Saturday Nov 5, 1 - 2:30pm

Join our naturalists at Sycamore Park for a moderate hike deep into Wilson Nature Preserve! We will meet by the trailhead and head out from there. Make sure to dress for the weather and bring water- this is a 2.5 mile hike with hills! Free, no registration required.

Walk and Talk: Fall Colors

Williamsburg to Batavia Hike Bike Trail
Tuesday November 8, 9:30 a.m.

Regular walking is fun and supports an active outdoor lifestyle, which is great for physical, mental, and emotional health. Join us for a leisurely group walk on a paved trail. You'll connect with nature, meet new friends, and enjoy the outdoors. All ages and fitness levels are encouraged to attend. Free, no registration required.

Winter Lecture Series

Pattison Park Lodge
Wednesday Nov 9, 6:30 pm

Join us for the first presentation in our Evening Lecture Series, Planting for Birds by Greg Torres, co-host of the Nature Guys podcast. Come mingle, share some refreshments, and learn!

"Planting for Birds" explores some of the mutualistic relationships between plants and birds, tips on how we can grow plants to create habitats to help birds thrive, as well as resources for selections of beautiful native plants that support our local ecosystem.

Lectures are held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Pattison Park Lodge. Presentations are geared towards adults/teens, free, no registration required.

Nature Play Days

Sycamore Park
Friday November 4 and 18, 1 - 3 p.m.
Saturday November 12, 1 - 3 p.m.

Drop in to these unstructured outdoor play sessions that help kids to make friends, explore, and learn about the world together. Play days are intended to encourage meaningful experiences in nature, which is great for children's health and learning! Ages 3-14. Free, no registration

required.

Conservation Work Day

Pattison Park Lakeside

Saturday November 19, 9 a.m. - noon

Join Clermont Parks for an invasive knock-out day at Pattison Park Lakeside! Be sure to wear protective clothing and bring a reusable water bottle. Ages 14 and up. Tools provided. Pre-registration is required- email naturalist@clermontcountyohio.gov for more information!



Save the Date!

Clermont Parks is having our second annual Winter Solstice Celebration, and this year will be even more magical! Join on December 21 and enjoy food trucks, drinks for all ages, music, crafts, luminary hikes, Instagrammable photo ops and more!

This is a free event at a beautiful park – hope to see you there.





Parks in the Community

October was a busy month for the parks district! From planting 85 trees at Kelley Nature Preserve and Kathryn Stagge-Marr to replanting the rain garden at Shor Park, we had a lot going on! A special thank you to Goshen Middle School for helping us plant trees to replace those destroyed by the tornado. If you are interested in volunteering, you can join our team as an individual or bring your church, scout, school or corporate group to Clermont Parks for a day of team-building and service. Pre-registration is required for volunteer opportunities. To learn more, visit the Give Back page at clermontparks.org.

Clermont County Park District

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