

Find Your Adventure

in Portage Parks!

PORTAGE PARK DISTRICT PROGRAM GUIDE
& ANNUAL REPORT

SPRING/
SUMMER
2023



ON THE INSIDE

PARK RX



BIRDING CLUB



OWLBERT'S ADVENTURES



NATURE EDUCATION



YOUR PORTAGE PARKS



A look back and a look ahead

We're happy to share with you this program guide and progress report loaded with great opportunities for you to get to know and enjoy your Portage Parks!

We had another exciting year in 2022 with the addition of 112 acres in Streetsboro and 171 acres in Rootstown that will be permanently conserved and developed as parks. Improvements were made to Dix Park and Trail Lake Park that added opportunities for family enjoyment, picnicking and special events. Our fantastic staff and invaluable volunteers continue to do wonderful work in programming, natural areas restoration, ongoing maintenance, and park patrols for safe, clean parks to experience all year long.

We've come a long way since 2014 when our ending year operating balance was less than \$18,000 and we had 1.5 employees. Thanks to the levy that was passed in May of that year, we've been able to reinforce the foundation of our growing park system through increasing public engagement, expanding partnerships, acquiring equipment, and developing and maintaining new parks and trails. See the Progress Report page to see how we've used levy funds and brought in an additional 60% from outside sources, including over \$190,000 from our Park District Foundation.

We hope you'll agree that the Portage Park District is a sound investment where we efficiently use local taxes to provide tangible benefits that last for generations to come, right here in Portage County. As Portage County continues to grow and develop, we need to grow a system of parks, trails and conserved lands that will keep pace and continue to enhance our quality of life into the future.

Opportunities abound for developing new parks, acquiring, and conserving land, partnering with local communities and developing new trails, but seizing those opportunities requires resources, before those opportunities are lost. Check out our Plans for the Future page to see what's possible.

Please stay in touch, get involved and learn how you can help to create a beautiful, healthy future for all, for generations to come.

Thank you for your support!

Christine

Christine Craycroft, Executive Director



Photo: Iris Mirelez



Photo: Joe DeFuria



Do You Love *Your* Portage Parks
Share your testimonial with us!



FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2022

ALL FUNDS			
Beginning Cash Balance	\$ 1,981,172		
REVENUES		EXPENDITURES	
Levy (1/2 mill property tax)	\$ 1,773,530	Personnel	\$ 774,425
Donations	\$57,020	Contract Services	\$107,097
Grants	\$ 1,337,298	Materials & Supplies	\$ 86,436
Interest	\$ 29,252	Land Purchase	\$ 1,220,938
Rentals & Royalties	\$ 24,735	Engineering & Construction	\$ 68,063
Fees, Fines, Services & Sales	\$ 0	Equipment & Vehicles	\$0
Refunds, Rollbacks, Credit Card Incentives	\$ 33,810	Property Taxes	\$ 19,947
TOTAL	\$3,255,645	TOTAL	\$ 2,277,446
		Ending Cash Balance	\$ 2,959,371

Volunteer with Portage Park District!

If you are looking for additional ways to support your parks, volunteering is just the ticket. Our volunteers help us monitor trail usage and maintenance needs, take part in citizen science, remove invasive species, plant trees, assist with educational programming, take photos, engage with the public at special events and more. There are a variety of opportunities for ages 12 and up to make a difference in Portage County. Visit our website to learn more about volunteering opportunities.

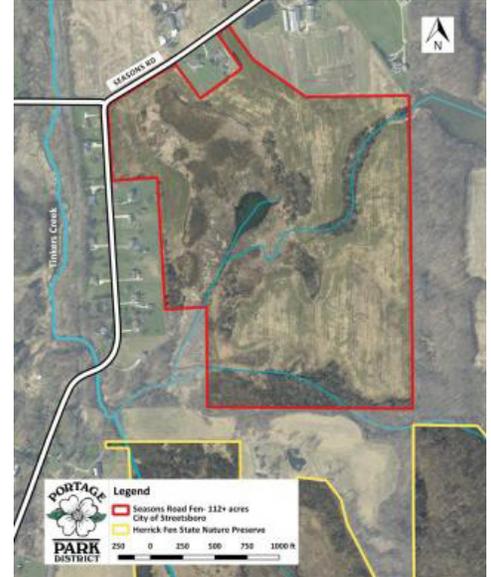


2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Tinkers Creek Greenway Phase III Acquired

Portage Park District's most recent acquisition is a 112-acre parcel on Seasons Road, Streetsboro, known as the Tinkers Creek Greenway Phase III. The project was made possible through partnerships with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS) who sponsored the project with \$1.72 million in funding through the Ohio EPA's Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program, with no local funding required. That funding will also cover restoration activities including invasive species control, plugging an old oil and gas well, clearing debris, restoring 9 acres of wetlands, and planting over 70 acres of forest and meadow habitat.

Tinkers Creek is the largest tributary to the Cuyahoga River which flows to Lake Erie, and this project is located near its headwaters. Conservation and restoration of this property protects and improves water quality flowing downstream, thus preventing the need for additional water treatment in the future. Investing in conservation now will save the NEORS and the OEPA money overall, while at the same time providing a beautiful public park for all to enjoy.



Bird Family Bog Park and Preserve Acquired

Thanks to another partnership with the non-profit West Creek Conservancy, (WCC), Portage Parks acquired a 171-acre property on Old Forge Road, Rootstown for only \$50,000 with the balance paid by a Clean Ohio Conservation Fund grant and H2Ohio grant. The property includes meadows, 60 acres of forest, a portion of Breakneck Creek, 40-acres of high-quality wetlands and a 23-acre bog.

The bog had been referenced by biologists in scholarly articles over the decades because of its rarity (only 2% of Ohio's original peatlands remain, concentrated in Northeast Ohio) and was the only known occurrence in Ohio of an endangered bog plant. The Park District and partners are working on ecological restoration, with park development as funding is available. Conservation of the land not only preserves important habitats, but it also reduces the potential for flooding and protects water quality in the Breakneck Creek Watershed. The property is adjacent to other preserved property and was also identified in the Park District's Master Plan analysis as being in an area of high park need.



NATURAL AREAS

- iNaturalist observations: 1,466 observations of living organisms; 432 additional species identified
- Since 2017: 5,899 total iNaturalist observations in Portage Park District; 1,942 species
- 28 State listed plant species documented at the parks to date
- Over 1800 trees planted to reforest 5 acres by volunteers, staff and Hiram College students
- Over 60 acres managed to control invasive plants and prepare for meadow and forest restoration; 25 acres of meadow habitat managed with prescribed fire

OPERATIONS

The Operations Department enjoys maintaining and caring for our parks and making improvements that everyone can enjoy for years to come. 2022 was another productive year and began with Dix Park and Trail Lake seeing major improvements:

- At Dix Park the improvements included a Story Walk Trail, a Nature Play Space, the .4 mile Bunting Trail that goes through a beautiful meadow, and an ADA accessible timber frame pavilion.
- Trail Lake Park saw the addition of an elevated, ADA accessible picnic area providing a spectacular view of the lake and accommodating larger groups.

RANGERS

From the Trail – Chief Ranger Kevin Nietert and Ranger Michelle Lee

The Rangers conducted 482 miles of foot patrols and 487 miles of bike patrols. During that time, they made 1,174 visitor contacts and issued ten warnings and took 11 reports. (7 Vandalism, 2 Found Property, 1 Suspicious Person, and 1 Violation of Park Rule)

We are looking forward to seeing you on the trails in 2023!

EDUCATION

Your Favorite Programs
In-person Programs

- Lichen Walk
- Garlic Mustard Challenge
- Full Moon Walk
- Exploring Vernal Pools

Virtual Programs

- Winter Native Seed Sowing
- History of the Headwaters
- Discovering Moths
- Scenic River Wonders

- **114 Programs offered**
- **1,014 Program Attendees**

VOLUNTEERS

There were 555 volunteer service hours in Portage Park District -- thank you volunteers!

This number includes:

- 245 hours from Trail and Natural Area Ambassadors visiting every park and trail
- 66 hours for Education Program Assistants (more than double the hours from 2021!)

PROGRESS REPORT



Portage Park District received voter approval for its first levy in 2014 for a ½ mill, 10-year property tax. This is a summary of progress 2014 - 2023:

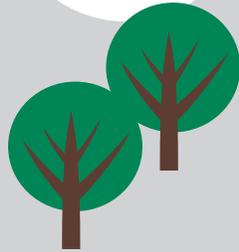
**OVER
60%
ROI**

Earned over \$7 million in grants, \$290,000 in cash donations, \$1.5 million worth of donated land and \$800,000 from other non-levy revenues—**over a 60% return on your tax levy investment.**

**1,335
MORE
ACRES**

**Acquired
1,335 acres of
park land that
will be
permanently
conserved!**

**4
NEW
PARKS**



1. **Morgan Park:** 540 acres in Shalersville Township with hiking trails, 1-mile accessible loop, rest area with butterfly garden, pergola, benches and restroom
2. **Shaw Woods:** 145 acres in Ravenna Township, donated by the Shaw family, with hiking and equestrian trails, restrooms, a primitive campsite for the nearby Buckeye Trail
3. **Red Fox Cuyahoga River Access:** public access to the state-designated Cuyahoga River Water Trail for paddling and fishing on the Upper Cuyahoga State Scenic River
4. **Trail Lake Park:** 221 acres in Streetsboro with picnic areas, restrooms, hiking trail, fishing pier, kayak launch and 1.6-mile paved accessible multipurpose trail.

**IMPROVED
PARKS &
TRAILS**



- **Towner's Woods:** Added accessible gazebo and boardwalk and new hiking trail. Made structural repairs to preserve the former railroad Brady Interlocking Switch Tower for other uses.
- **Dix Park:** added restroom, Story Walk Trail, new hiking trail, natural play area and accessible trailhead and picnic shelter.
- **The PORTAGE Hike and Bike Trail:** resurfaced 3.6 miles with asphalt.
- **Headwaters Trail:** Resurfaced the limestone trail and added new trailhead parking areas and restroom. Extended the trail and added Mennonite Road trail access.
- **Improved natural surface trails throughout.**



**100'S
OF FREE
PROGRAMS**

Provided 100's of free community programs for all ages and abilities, virtually and in-person at parks and other sites across the county. Engaged dozens of volunteers to augment staff.

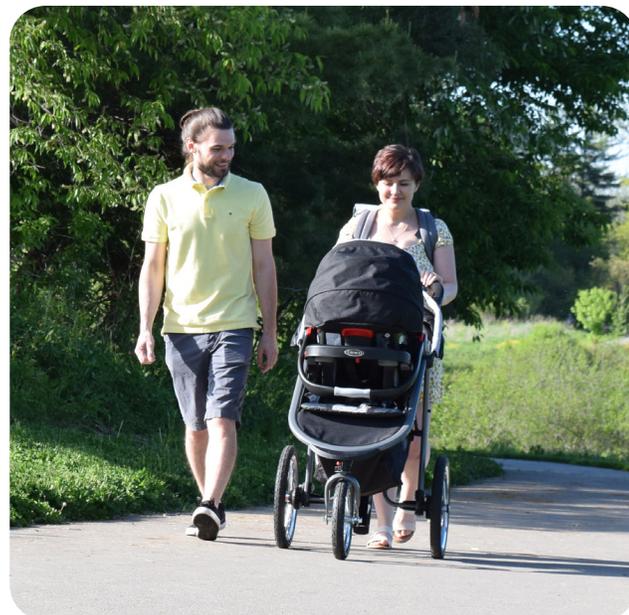
- ✓ **Renovated an existing building into our Operations Center** with offices, workshop and equipment storage for Maintenance, Natural Areas and Ranger staff
- ✓ **Managed natural resources on over 2,400 acres** including restoring areas through removing invasive species, planting trees and wildflowers and restoring wetlands.
- ✓ **Maintained safe, clean facilities** in 7 open parks and trails, 8 pending parks, and 17 miles of multipurpose trails across the county.
- ✓ **Developed an excellent staff** of 12 full-time and 3 part-time employees. Our dedicated Park Commissioners, who serve without pay, are the governing board appointed by the Portage County Probate Judge.



PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Develop and open new parks on properties already owned by Portage Park District

- Headwaters Trail extended to Aurora (2 miles in Mantua Township)
- “Kent Bog Expansion Park” (215 acres Kent and Brimfield)
- Bird Family Bog Park (171 acres Rootstown)
- Breakneck Creek Park (63 acres Ravenna Township)
- “Seasons Road Fen” Park (112 acres Streetsboro)
- “Eagle Creek Greenway” Park (325 acres Hiram Township)
- Chagrin Headwaters Park (95 acres Mantua)
- Walter Park (80 acres Palmyra)
- Franklin Bog Park (58 acres Franklin Township)



Continue to acquire and improve important natural areas, trail corridors and open space across:

- Fulfill purchase agreements for an additional 550+ acres, contingent upon funding
- Pursue trail corridors where possible for extending and connecting hike and bike trails
- Add picnic areas and shelters, restrooms, camping sites, outdoor adventure facilities
- Improve trails: extend, repair, resurface, add signage, amenities
- Develop partnerships with local communities to assist with their parks and trails



Grow programs to serve Portage County Communities

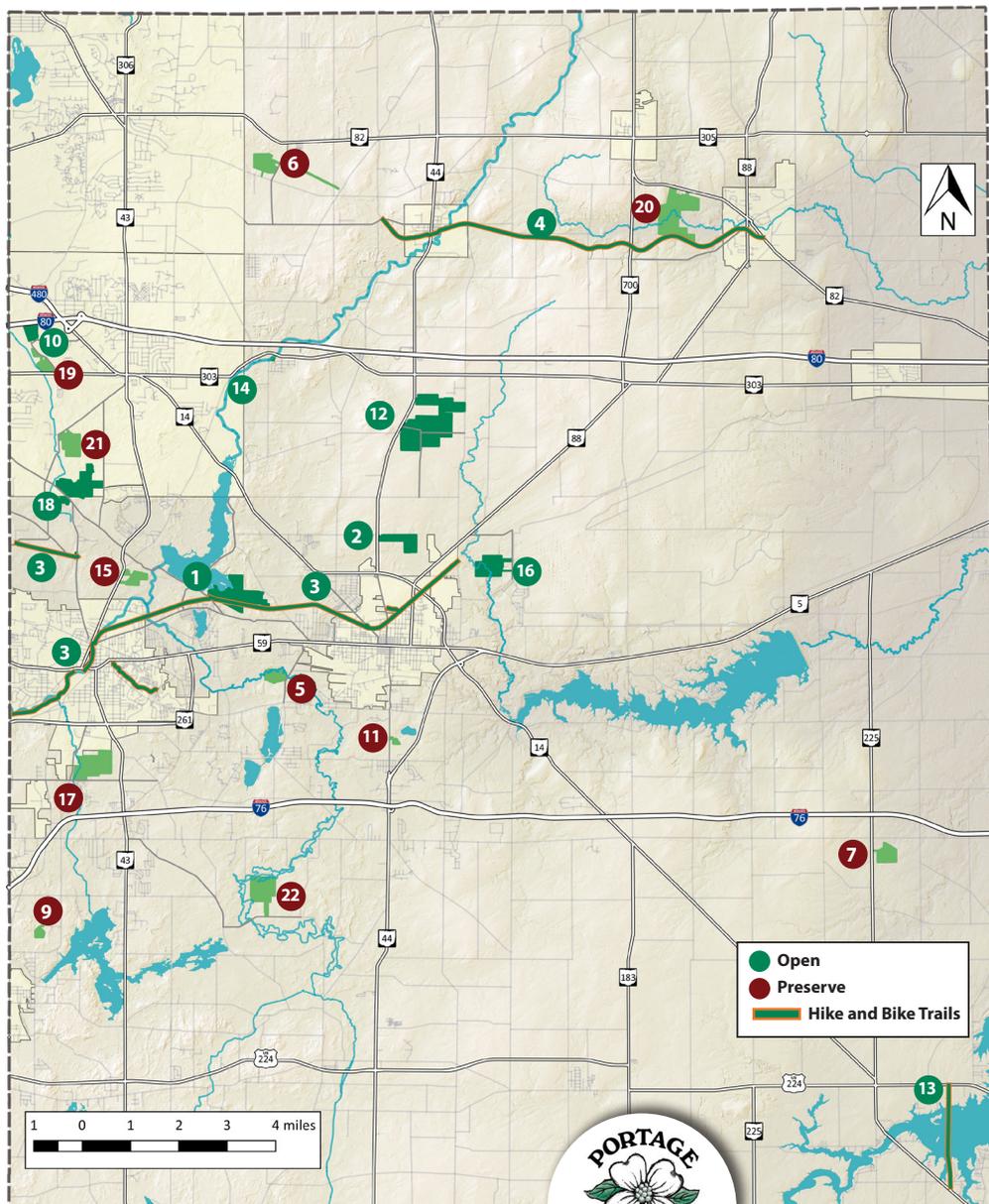
- Continue to offer programs for all ages and abilities, connecting people with nature
- Partner with job training and youth development programs
- Partner with schools and non-profits to support childhood education, around-school care and summer camps for all.

The Park District will seek voter support for a ½ mill replacement plus ½ mill additional property tax levy for 10-years on the November 7, 2023 ballot. The levy would cost the owner of a \$100,000 property \$35.00/year, less than \$3/month. The new levy will generate ~\$4.5 million/year; the current levy generates ~\$1.8 million/year.

This levy will support continued land conservation, park improvements and the efficient operation of safe, clean parks and trails. Without the additional levy, the Park District will be severely limited in conserving land and water resources and creating new parks and trails.



- 1 TOWNER'S WOODS PARK**
2264 Ravenna Rd., Franklin Twp.
254 acres of woods, wetlands and meadow overlooking Lake Pippen. Picnic shelter and accessible gazebo.
- 2 DIX PARK**
7318 ST RT 44, Ravenna Twp. - 103 acres of woods and wetlands with hiking trails.
- 3 THE PORTAGE HIKE AND BIKE TRAIL**
535 Cleveland Rd., Ravenna;
1557 Lake Rockwell Rd., Franklin Twp.;
784 Judson Rd., Franklin Twp.
Managed in partnership with the cities of Kent and Ravenna, and Kent State University. Asphalt-paved multipurpose trail.
- 4 HEADWATERS TRAIL**
4633 Mill St., Mantua, OH
10602 Vaughn Rd., Mantua, OH
10446 Asbury Rd., Hiram Twp.
10480 ST RT 700, Garrettsville, OH
10647 Freedom St., Garrettsville, OH
South St., Garrettsville, OH
Limestone-surfaced multipurpose trail.
- 5 BREAKNECK CREEK PRESERVE**
Ravenna Twp. - 66 acres of open meadow, riparian woods and wetlands. Open only for guided hikes.
- 6 CHAGRIN HEADWATERS PRESERVE**
Mantua Twp. - 95 acres of woods, wetlands and streams. Open only for guided hikes.
- 7 WALTER PRESERVE**
Palmyra Twp. - 80 acres of woods and wetlands. Open only for guided hikes.
- 9 GRAY BIRCH BOG PRESERVE**
Brimfield Twp. - 22 acre sphagnum birch bog. Open only for guided hikes.
- 10 SENECA PONDS PARK**
515 Mondial Pkwy, Streetsboro - 48 acres of woods, wetlands and ponds for hiking and fishing.
- 11 DIX PRESERVE**
Rootstown Twp. - 10 acre parcel. Open only for guided hikes.
- 12 MORGAN PARK** ♿
8828 ST RT 44, Shalersville Twp. - 544 acres of woods, wetlands, fields and streams.
- 13 BERLIN LAKE TRAIL** ♿
10228 ST RT 224, Deerfield Twp.;
232 Kirkbride Rd. - 2.1 mile multipurpose trail.
- 14 RED FOX BOAT TAKEOUT - UPPER CUYAHOGA STATE SCENIC RIVER**
9263 Price Rd., Shalersville Twp.,
Takeout and fishing access only.
- 15 FRANKLIN BOG PRESERVE**
Franklin Twp. - 58 acres of woods and wetlands, including a kettlehole lake and sphagnum peat bog. Open only for guided hikes.
- 16 SHAW WOODS PARK**
7075 Beery Rd., Ravenna Twp. - 145 acres of woods, wetlands and ravines and the West Branch of the Mahoning River. Hiking and equestrian trails. Buckeye Trail primitive campsite available for reservation.
- 17 KENT BOG EXPANSION PRESERVE***
Brimfield Twp./Kent - 215 acres of mature woods and old fields protecting over 50 acres of sphagnum peat bog and a stretch of Plum Creek including fen habitat. Open only for guided hikes.



- 18 TRAIL LAKE PARK** ♿
605 Ravenna Rd., Streetsboro - 222 acres of woods and diverse habitat with 30-acre fishing lake, and a handicap accessible kayak launch.
- 19 BECK PRESERVE***
Streetsboro - 63 acres of wetlands and shrubby forest along Tinkers Creek protecting fen habitat. Open only for guided hikes.
- 20 EAGLE CREEK GREENWAY PRESERVE***
Hiram Twp. - 325 acres of rolling meadows and forest with stretches of Eagle Creek and Silver Creek, tributaries to the Mahoning River. Open only for guided hikes.
- 21 TINKERS CREEK GREENWAY PHASE III PRESERVE***
Streetsboro - 112 acres of meadows and woods with high quality wetlands and stream. Open only for guided hikes.
- 22 BIRD FAMILY BOG PRESERVE***
Rootstown Twp. - 171 acres of fields and forest with a large sphagnum bog and streams. Open only for guided hikes.

*These location names are temporary, pending park development.



Park Reminders

- Observe park hours; stay on trails.
- Keep pets leashed and properly dispose of pet waste.
- Alcohol is prohibited except by special permit.
- Motor vehicles are prohibited. Class I and II electric bikes and scooters are allowed on bike trails.
- On multipurpose trails stay right, pass on left. Alert others when passing.
- Release or removal of animals and plants on park properties is prohibited.

Full park rules found at portageparkdistrict.org

Visit portageparkdistrict.org for more information on park amenities and trails.



SELF-GUIDED ADVENTURES



Junior Ranger Program launches in May 2023!

The Junior Ranger program is primarily self-guided and intended for ages 5-12 but is fun for any age! Junior Rangers will receive a booklet and then work to complete all 16 activities to earn a wooden Junior Ranger Badge. Once all the activities are complete, Junior Rangers can register for a badge-pinning ceremony with a Portage Park District Ranger. As you complete the activities you will learn about some of the places and stories that make Portage Parks unique. Your Junior Ranger Activities will be a part of your wonderful adventures in the natural world.



Field Bag Exploration

Look for park pop-up events this year throughout the summer and check out a field bag for a self-guided exploration. Park pop-ups are held during the year as opportunities to learn more from park staff, pick up maps and participate in an activity. Field Bags can be checked out and returned to staff during a pop-up event.



Wild Hikes Challenge

Our Wild Hikes Challenge theme for 2023 is the **Year of the Wood Frog** featuring several hikes where you might see wood frogs. To complete your challenge, download your form from our website or grab one from a park kiosk, hike 8 trails on the list and turn in for rewards! You can earn a hiking staff and a medallion, and your dog can earn a bandana!

Check out our self guided hikes available at Seneca Ponds & Trail Lake Park.




Join our Education Team for FREE Programs all year round!

The next several pages include our summer program dates for you to enjoy. Programs require registration made on the portageparkdistrict.org website (or by calling the park office at 330-297-7728), helping us keep a healthy staff to attendee ratio.

Note: Programs are uploaded to the website monthly toward the end of the previous month.

LOOK FOR THESE SYMBOLS TO FIND YOUR PERFECT ADVENTURE



PARK RX

Join Portage Park District and our partners to focus on a healthier you. We work with partners in health and wellness fields to help you find new ways to nourish your mind and body through nature.



OWLBERT'S ADVENTURES

Inspired by our mascot, Owlbert, this series is designed for our younger park patrons (PreK-elementary). Owlbert's Adventures will feature engaging activities and a hike length that's appropriate for smaller legs!



BIRDING CLUB

Did you know that birding is one of the fastest growing hobbies in North America? We know there are many talented birders in the area and our goal is to provide a space for both experts and newbies to learn and bird together at our local parks!



WEBINAR

Portage Park District offers webinars to learn about nature in the comfort of your own home. Many past webinars are also available on our YouTube channel.

May at a Glance

All programs require registration.
Visit our website for the up to date program information.

DAY	TIME	WHAT	WHERE
8	4:00 PM	Mushroom Hike	Towner's Woods Park
9	5:30 PM	Spring Ephemeral Wildflower Hike	Dix Park
10	6:00 PM	Ride w/ a Ranger	Portage Hike & Bike Trail, Franklin Connector
11	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Portage Hike & Bike Trail, Cleveland Road
11	9:00 PM	Moth Night	Trail Lake Park
13	7:30 AM	Birding Club	Berlin Lake Trail
13	10:00 AM	UH Hike with an Expert	Morgan Park
16	2:00 PM	Spring Bees	Morgan Park
16	5:15 PM	In with the Indigos Bird Craft	Morgan Operation Center
17	7:00 PM	Tick and Mosquito Safety	Webinar
22	5:30 PM	World Biodiversity Day Seek Blitz	Shaw Woods
23	6:00 PM	Owlbert's Great Migration Game	Morgan Park
25	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Berlin Lake Trail
26	9:00 AM	Happy Heart Hike	Headwaters Trail, Mill St.
27	6:00 AM	BYOK (Bring Your Own Kayak)	Trail Lake Park
27	11:00 AM	Wildflower Hike	Towner's Woods Park
30	6:00 PM	Junior Ranger Kickoff	Towner's Woods Park

Mushroom Hike Monday, May 8, 4:00 PM

Natural Areas Specialist Emmet Roberts will take us on a guided hike and show us all the tips and tricks on how to spot and identify the various fungi that call Portage Park District home.

Spring Ephemeral Wildflower Hike Tuesday, May 9, 5:30 PM

There is a reason that Dix Park has a trail named the Trillium Trail! Early spring ephemeral wildflowers are popping up through the forest floor this time of year. We will walk together to look for and learn to identify these little spring gems.

Ride with a Ranger Wednesday, May 10, 6:00 PM

As the first in a series of rides, Chief Ranger Kevin Nietert will lead folks on a 2.6-mile ride along the Portage Hike and Bike Trail. As summer progresses, these rides will get longer. Not recommended for novice riders.

Senior Hike Thursday, May 11, 12:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Moth Night Thursday, May 11, 9:00 PM

Moths rarely get the credit they deserve because they come out after dark. We will literally be shining a light on these incredible night-time

creatures to see all the forms that we miss out on during the day.

Birding Club Saturday, May 13, 7:30 AM

Novices and experts alike are welcome to scout the trees and practice bird identification. Berlin Lake is the #1 birding hotspot in Portage County for birds and we are bound to see a multitude of species during the spring warbler migration.

UH Hike with an Expert Saturday, May 13, 10:00 AM

A representative from University Hospitals Portage Medical Center Rehabilitation Department will hike with us and discuss mobility and strength. Bring your questions!

Spring Bees Tuesday, May 16, 2:00 PM

By the middle of May, bees are already busy filling their ecological niche. Bob Heath will show us how to identify them and explain the different roles they perform.

In with the Indigos Birding Craft Tuesday, May 16, 5:15 PM

As we await the return of these blue beauties, let's learn how to make Indigo Buntings out of felt from Nancy Smith, our volunteer who recently was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Portage Park District Foundation's Environmental Awards. All ages are welcome, but this craft may be difficult for little hands without additional support.

Tick and Mosquito Safety Webinar Wednesday, May 17, 7:00 PM

Ticks and mosquitoes are a nuisance to anyone who enjoys exploring the outdoors. Even though they have been out since March, it is never too late to learn how to keep yourself, your family, and your pets safe.

World Biodiversity Day Blitz with Seek Monday, May 22, 5:30 PM

Learn about Seek, a useful phone application, as we try to identify as many species as possible. You'll be surprised by the number of organisms that can be found within arm's reach!

Owlbert's Adventure: Great Migration Game Tuesday, May 23, 6:00 PM

Make your way around Morgan Circle to experience the different challenges a migrating bird might encounter. Geared toward our younger park friends but anyone is welcome to play!

Senior Hike Thursday, May 25, 12:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Happy Heart Hike Friday, May 26, 9:00 AM

This hike is for anyone who wants to move at a faster pace and potentially even break a sweat! Our goal is to stay at 3-4 mph with minimal breaks. Don't forget comfortable shoes and water! These hikes will get longer as the summer progresses.

BYOK (Bring Your Own Kayak) Saturday, May 27, 6:00 AM

The early bird gets to go on the Kayak Launch first! Bring your own kayak and binoculars as we paddle around Trail Lake Park to look for waterfowl and other birds. Life jackets are required.

Wildflower Hike Saturday, May 27, 11:00 AM

Is there anything more enchanting than a walk in the woods during peak wildflower season? Join us for a hike to meet and enjoy some of our beautiful spring ephemeral wildflowers. The forest is alive with the sights and sounds of new life springing forth this time of year!

Junior Ranger Kickoff Event Tuesday, May 30, 6:00 PM

Come be a part of the inaugural class of the Portage Park District Junior Ranger Program!

Take the pledge to protect and conserve our natural areas then learn about the activities you can complete in your booklet all summer long! Geared for ages 5-12 but fun for any age.





Nutrition Talk with Sequoia Wellness Thursday, June 1, 6:00 PM

Come with questions to ask our guest speaker from Sequoia Wellness. We will cover various topics including healthy eating on the go to keep you fueled up for summer.

Senior Hike Thursday, June 8, 12:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Dix Park Pavilion Ribbon Cutting Saturday, June 10, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

We are celebrating our newest addition and first-ever pavilion in Portage Park District! Come out for on-the-hour guided hikes, adventures in the Nature Play Area, and other events geared toward the whole family!

Waterfall Walk Tuesday, June 13, 11:00 AM

Just off the Headwaters Trail sits a small but beautiful natural waterfall. Let's hope for a big rain the night before so the water is rushing by the time we reach it!

Family Game Night Tuesday, June 13, 6:00 PM

Perfect for all ages! Come prepared to play as a family or challenge each other on various park-related topics. Themes and games change each month!

Birding Club Wednesday, June 14, 8:00 AM

Come practice your avian identification skills in a laid-back setting. Nature newbies are welcome to come try out a new hobby in a safe and welcoming atmosphere!

Ride with a Ranger Wednesday, June 14, 6:00 PM

Chief Ranger Kevin Nietert will lead folks on a 4.4-mile ride along the Berlin Lake Trail. As summer progresses, these rides will get longer. Not recommended for novice riders.

Moth Night Thursday, June 15, 9:30 PM

As our second moth night of the season, we will be able to compare what we see as the season progresses. Come learn more about these nocturnal lepidopterans with us!

Nature Scavenger Hunt Friday, June 16, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Designed for our younger park visitors, we will be using colors and shapes as clues in our nature scavenger hunt! Join us for a fun new way to explore along the trail and learn about our natural world.



June at a Glance

All programs require registration.
Visit our website for the up to date program information.

DAY	TIME	WHAT	WHERE
1	6:00 PM	Nutrition Talk with Sequoia Wellness	Dix Park
8	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Trail Lake Park
10	11:00 AM	Ribbon Cutting	Dix Park
13	11:00 AM	Waterfall Walk	Headwaters Trail Asbury Rd
13	6:00 PM	Family Game Night	Dix Park
14	8:00 AM	Birding Club	Shaw Woods
14	6:00 PM	Ride with a Ranger	Berlin Lake Trail
15	9:30 PM	Moth Night	TBD
16	9:00 AM-12:00 PM	Nature Scavenger Hunt	Trail Lake Park
20	6:30 PM	Stream Exploration	Shaw Woods
21	9:00 PM	Summer Solstice Astronomy	Morgan Park
22	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Portage Hike and Bike Trail, Cleveland Road
22	6:30 PM	Raptor Hallow Visit	Towner's Woods
26	7:00 PM	Summer in Your PPD	Webinar
27	6:00 PM	Junior Ranger Bird Activity	Trail Lake Park
29	7:00 PM	Zumba with Sequoia Wellness	Morgan Park
30	9:00 AM	Happy Heart Hike	Portage Hike & Bike Trail, Cleveland Road

Stream Exploration Tuesday, June 20, 6:30 PM

What on earth is a macroinvertebrate? Explore a high-quality headwater stream with our staff and meet some aquatic creatures up close and personal! We will be using nets to gently sample the stream and learn how we determine water quality based on the macroinvertebrates we find.

Summer Solstice Astronomy Wednesday, June 21, 9:00 PM

Enjoy the first day of summer gazing at the night sky. We'll talk about what is up above at this time of year and learn more about the history of the summer solstice.

Senior Hike Thursday, June 22, 12:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Raptor Hallow Visit Thursday, June 22, 6:30 PM

Josh Kuszmaul from Raptor Hallow will bring a few of his feathered friends to join us for this unique and engaging experience where we will learn about the natural history and adaptations that make raptors so interesting.

Summer in Your PPD Webinar Monday, June 26, 7:00 PM

We still have so many summer days left and Portage Park District has a plethora of ways for you to spend them. This webinar is designed to highlight the different activities you can check off of your summer bucket list.

Junior Ranger Bird Activity Tuesday, June 27, 6:00 PM

Get a step closer to earning your Junior Ranger Badge by completing one of the booklet's activities with park educators! This event will focus on the birding activity.

Zumba with Sequoia Wellness Thursday, June 29, 7:00 PM

Shake your tail feathers with Sequoia Wellness as we dance Zumba together in the middle of Morgan Meadow!

Happy Heart Hike Friday, June 30, 9:00 AM

This hike is for anyone who wants to move at a faster pace and potentially even break a sweat! Our goal is to stay at 3-4 mph with minimal breaks. Don't forget comfortable shoes and water! These hikes will get longer as the summer progresses.

July at a Glance

All programs require registration.
Visit our website for the up to date program information.

DAY	TIME	WHAT	WHERE
6	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Morgan Park
6	6:00 PM	Tree Identification	Shaw Woods
8	8:00 AM	Headwaters Adventure Race	Buchert Park
11	6:00 PM	Family Game Night	Dix Park
12	9:00 AM	Touch a Bug	Morgan Park
12	6:00 PM	Ride with a Ranger	Portage Hike & Bike Trail
13	11:00 AM	Owlbert's Adventures: Pond Life	Seneca Ponds Park
13	6:00 PM	UH Hike with an Expert	Trail Lake Park
17	7:00 PM	Bats	Webinar
18	2:00 PM	Summer Bees	Morgan Park
19	8:00 AM	Birding Club	Morgan Park
19	6:00 PM	Backyard Stewardship for Beginners	Morgan Operation Center
20	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Headwaters Trail, St Rt 700
20	6:00 PM	Junior Ranger What Lives Under Logs	Dix Park
21	10:00 PM	Moth Night	TBD
22	6:00 PM	Art in the Park Meadow Painting	Morgan Park
28	9:00 AM	Happy Heart Hike	Headwaters Trail, St Rt 700

Senior Hike Thursday, July 6, 6:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Tree Identification Thursday, July 6, 6:00 PM

Join our very own Natural Areas Manager, Bob Lange, as he takes us on a guided hike through Shaw Woods. He'll be pointing out the trees we encounter and teaching us the keys to identifying them.

Headwaters Adventure Race Saturday, July 8, 8:00 AM

Join the Portage Park District Foundation as they run 2 miles, bike 10 miles, and paddle 5 miles. Whether you compete solo or as a team, you are bound to have a great time! All proceeds support Your Portage Parks.



Family Game Night Tuesday, July 11, 6:00 PM

Perfect for all ages! Come prepared to play as a family or challenge each other on various park-related topics. Themes and games change each month!

Touch a Bug Wednesday, July 12, 9:00 AM

Nature newbie? Do insects and creepy crawlies creep you out? This program is for you! Once you learn about all the benefits they provide, you will likely celebrate and not squish them! Visit us in a safe, no-pressure environment to learn about some of our local insects. You'll even be able to touch them when and if you are ready!



Ride with a Ranger Wednesday, July 12, 6:00 PM

Join Chief Ranger Kevin Nietert once again on a 14-mile ride along the whole Portage Hike and Bike Trail. As summer progresses, these rides will get longer. Not recommended for novice riders.

Owlbert's Adventure: Pond Life Thursday, July 13, 11:00 AM

We are used to seeing ducks and geese swimming, and we know fish are in ponds, too. But how much do you know about all the other critters that call our bodies of water home? Come investigate all types of pond life on this Owlbert's Adventure.

UH Hike with an Expert Thursday, July 13, 6:00 PM

A representative from University Hospitals Portage Medical Center Cardiovascular Department will hike with us and discuss all things heart health. Bring your questions!

Bats Webinar Monday, July 17, 7:00 PM

Bats sometimes get a bad rap, but these fascinating creatures fill a very important ecological niche. Join us from the comfort of your own home as we learn more about these nocturnal aerialists.

Summer Bees Tuesday, July 18, 2:00 PM

Join on our second bee outing of the summer, learning about how the populations have changed throughout the season.

Birding Club Wednesday, July 19, 8:00 AM

Come practice your avian identification skills in a laid-back setting. Nature newbies are welcome to come try out a new hobby in a safe and welcoming atmosphere!

Backyard Stewardship for Beginners Wednesday, July 19, 6:00 PM

Join insect and botanical photographer Danae Wolfe as we learn about the importance of insects and spiders and explore ways to protect and preserve bugs in your own backyard through sustainable land stewardship.

Senior Hike Thursday, July 20, 12:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Junior Ranger Event Thursday, July 20, 6:00 PM

The forest is always abuzz with different life forms throughout the summer, but there is an entirely unique ecosystem functioning underneath each log. Join us as we take a peak at these little habitats.



Moth Night Friday, July 21, 10:00 PM

As our final moth night of the summer, we hope to see a second wave of moth activity to enhance what we've been seeing all season.

Art in the Park Meadow Painting Saturday, July 22, 6:00 PM

Whether you are a modern-day Pablo Picasso or can barely stay inside the lines, come do art in the park with us, using a beautiful summer meadow as your muse.

Happy Heart Hike Friday, July 28, 9:00 AM

This hike is for anyone who wants to move at a faster pace and potentially even break a sweat! Our goal is to stay at 3-4 mph with minimal breaks. Don't forget comfortable shoes and water! These hikes will get longer as the summer progresses.



AUGUST

Tai Chi with Sequoia Wellness Wednesday, August 2, 10:30 AM



Taking a moment to center yourself is a great way to start any day. Sequoia Wellness will be in the parks to guide us through this "meditation in motion" practice.

Family Game Night Tuesday, August 8, 6:00 PM

Perfect for all ages! Come prepared to play as a family or challenge each other on various park-related topics. Themes and games change each month!

Stream Quality Monitoring Wednesday, August 9, 10:00 AM

Join the team from Akron Watershed as they lead us through water sampling and macroinvertebrate studies while we discuss the importance of understanding water quality.

Ride with a Ranger Wednesday, August 9, 6:00 PM



Our final ride of the season will also be the longest! Join Chief Nietert on a 17-mile ride along the entire Headwaters Trail. Not for novice riders.

Senior Hike Thursday, August 10, 12:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Birding Club Saturday, August 12, 8:00 AM



Come get a final glimpse of some beautiful birds before fall migration begins. Your skill level does not matter – as long as you have an interest in learning about these winged wonders.

Junior Ranger Pinning Ceremony Saturday, August 12, 12:00 PM



You've worked hard all summer protecting the Parks and filling out your booklet, now it is your time to shine as Chief Nietert gives you your very own ranger pin! Be proud!

NABA Butterfly Count Sunday, August 13, 10:30 AM

Join us for our annual Butterfly Count at Towner's Woods. Judy Semroc, from Nature Spark, will lead the public hike and help all participants to learn about butterflies and join in our survey. We will seek out both adult butterflies and caterpillars. Come and enjoy the beauty of our native butterflies.



August at a Glance

All programs require registration. Visit our website for the up to date program information.

DAY	TIME	WHAT	WHERE
2	10:30 AM	Tai Chi with Sequoia Wellness	Towner's Woods
8	6:00 PM	Family Game Night	Dix Park
9	10:00 AM	Stream Quality Monitoring	Buchert Park
9	6:00 PM	Ride with a Ranger	Headwaters Trail
10	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Portage Hike & Bike Trail, Cleveland Rd
12	8:00 AM	Birding Club	Dix Park
12	12:00 PM	Junior Ranger Pinning Ceremony	Towner's Woods
13	10:30 AM	NABA Butterfly Count	Towner's Woods
15	8:00 PM	Nature Sounds at Night	Morgan Park
17	6:30 PM	Yoga with Sequoia Wellness	Towner's Woods
24	12:00 PM	Senior Hike	Trail Lake Park
24	3:00 PM	Owlbert's Adventure: Butterfly Bliss	Dix Park
25	9:00 AM	Happy Heart Hike	Portage Hike & Bike Trail, Lake Rockwell
25	7:30 PM	Sunset Hike	Trail Lake Park
29	7:00 PM	Wetlands and Watersheds	Webinar

Nature Sounds at Night Tuesday, August 15, 8:00 PM

Nature performs its own symphony every night – all we have to do is unplug and listen. Join us for the best free concert you'll hear all summer!

Yoga with Sequoia Wellness Thursday, August 17, 6:30 PM



Press the pause button on this busy summer as we enjoy yoga in the park. Sequoia Wellness will be leading us through this practice as we take a moment for ourselves.



Senior Hike Thursday, August 24, 12:00 PM

Enjoy a Senior Hike with friends! These slower paced, group hikes offer a chance for all ages to enjoy an ADA accessible trail at one of your Portage Parks or Multipurpose Trails.

Owlbert's Adventure: Butterfly Bliss Thursday, August 24, 3:00 PM



Butterflies effortlessly float through the air, but they have so many adaptations that allow them to survive with such delicate bodies. Come learn with us as we try to spot a few!

Happy Heart Hike Friday, August 25, 9:00 AM



This hike is for anyone who wants to move at a faster pace and potentially even break a sweat! Our goal is to stay at 3-4 mph with minimal breaks. Don't forget comfortable shoes and water! These hikes will get longer as the summer progresses.

Sunset Hike Friday, August 25, 7:30 PM

End your week on a high note as we stroll through the park with a uniquely painted backdrop only nature could produce.

Wetlands and Watersheds Webinar Tuesday, August 29, 7:00 PM



No matter where you are, you are in a watershed! Do you know what watershed you live in? During this webinar we will highlight the importance of wetlands and how we can do our part to keep them clean.

What is Park Rx?

Park Rx is a "prescription for health". The National Park Rx Initiative is made up of agencies that are dedicated to using nature and public lands to improve individual and community health.



Portage Park District Park Rx:

Our goal is to help our community get healthy and stay healthy while enjoying Portage Parks. Walk or bike to take care of your heart, rehabilitate after surgery or simply relax in the beauty and peace of nature.



Look for the Park Rx events in this guide.

Find Your Adventure in Portage Parks!

Portage Park District
705 Oakwood St, Suite G-4
Ravenna, OH 44266

**SPRING/
SUMMER
2023**

Support *Your* Portage Parks

There are many ways that you can help support the Portage Park District in our mission to conserve Portage County's natural resources. You can volunteer and give of your time, donate land to leave a legacy of conservation, or donate funds to the Portage Park District Foundation. Your generous contributions will help build and maintain our park system for future generations. Get involved today!



Photo: George Rose



Register for events and learn more at
portageparkdistrict.org

705 Oakwood St., Suite G-4, Ravenna, OH 44266 • 330.297.7728 • admin@portageparkdistrict.org