

PORTAGE PARK DISTRICT

Monthly Newsletter



Coneflowers in Bloom

July 6, 2023

Greetings!

We hope you had a safe and happy Fourth of July! It may feel like summer is cruising by, but we want you to know that there are still plenty of opportunities to get outside and explore Your Portage Parks, on your own or on one of our group programs.

Don't miss your chance to participate in the [Headwaters Adventure Race](#) sponsored by the Portage Park District Foundation THIS SATURDAY!

Our events calendar is brimming with options, including our summer staples like birding club, Ride with a Ranger, family game nights, happy heart hikes, and Owlbert's adventures. Look for new options as well, such as Touch a Bug, a Tree ID Hike with our very own Bob Lange, and Art in the Park!

Explore all programs and register on our [Things to Do page](#).

Partners In the Parks



Bird Family Bog BioBlitz and H2Ohio Celebration

Portage Park District recently hosted a BioBlitz on the 171-acre Bird Family Bog Preserve where dozens of conservation professionals from several allied organizations identified and recorded as many different plant, fungi and animal species as possible over 2 days. So far, over 200 vascular plants, 150 insects, and 75 species of birds have been cataloged!

A highlight of the event featured a visit from Ohio Department of Natural Resources Director Mary Mertz, for a ribbon cutting to celebrate the State's H2Ohio grant program that provided the majority of funding for the acquisition. That relatively new funding program emphasizes water quality improvement through land protection and restoration. The project was also a partnership with the West Creek Conservancy who pre-acquired the property and secured additional funding from the Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Program before transferring it to the Park District, who provided local matching funds.

The Park District and its partners, including The Nature Conservancy, will continue to restore the wetlands, meadows and forests. The property is currently open only for staff-guided programs, with future park development dependent on additional planning and funding. Stay tuned and watch out for Preserve Peeks!

Interested in Volunteering?

Do you love walking the trails of your favorite Portage Park? Do you enjoy engaging with the public and answering questions about the things you love? Are you interested in local wildlife and contributing to scientific data? Do you take photos of all the plants and animals everywhere you go? These are just a few of the things our wonderful volunteers do. If interested, email [Education Outreach Specialist Becca Rodhe](mailto:EducationOutreach@portagepark.org) to learn more.





Junior Ranger Program Join us!

Junior Rangers had a blast this month learning about birds as we completed a page in their booklet together! This program is designed for children ages 5-12, but is fun for any age! If you missed the kickoff, you can still join! Call the office at 330-297-7728 to schedule a time to pick up your booklet. Be sure to check the website for park educator-led Junior Ranger activities. When you complete the booklet, we will have a ceremony for all Junior Rangers to receive their own badge!

[Learn more on our website!](#)

Shout out to Tomas Curtis!

Our former Natural Areas Specialist, Tomás Curtis, has discovered a new species of lichen and named it after his father.

Way to go, Tomás!

Read more in the [Akron Beacon Journal](#).



Cuyahoga River Water Trail

Very few things beat a paddle down the river on a beautiful summer day. Lucky for us we have a good portion of the Cuyahoga River right in our area. Check out the Cuyahoga River Water Trail for more information on accessing the river, maps, and how to stay safe on the water this summer.

[Visit the website here!](#)

Upcoming Programs



Try our [self-guided hikes](#) at Trail Lake Park and Seneca Ponds!

All programs and events can be found on our [Things to Do page](#). Make sure you check out all the great ways to engage with nature!

Backyard Stewardship for Beginners

Join us in welcoming insect and botanical photographer Danae Wolfe as she teaches us the importance of insects and spiders and helps us explore ways to protect and preserve bugs in our own backyard through sustainable land stewardship.

Space is limited for this event.

[Register here for July 19.](#)

Our education programs require registration - this helps us keep an optimal staff to participant ratio. Join us and learn about the natural world around us.

Upcoming Senior Hikes:

[Senior Hike - July 6](#)

[Senior Hike - July 20](#)

Visit our [YouTube channel](#).



Tree Identification Hike July 6 @ 6 PM

Join our very own Natural Areas Steward, 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.

[Register here.](#)



Hike with an Expert from UH July 13 @ 6 PM

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

Bring your questions!

[Register here.](#)



Owlbert's Adventures: Pond Life June 1 @ 6 PM

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? Geared toward kids, come investigate all types of pond life!

[Register here.](#)

Portage Park District Foundation

HEADWATERS



Adventure Race



The Headwaters Adventure Race starts and ends in Mantua Village and involves a 2-mile run on the Headwaters Trail past the Marsh Wetlands State Nature Preserve, a 10 mile pedal past scenic landscapes and preserved lands, and a 5-mile paddle on the Upper Cuyahoga River. Do it all yourself, or join a team to do it together or break up the legs. Money raised from the race benefits the Portage Park District.

Learn more about the Headwaters Race and register here!



Wild Hikes Challenge

Our **2023 theme is The Year of the Wood frog!** You'll even find some Wood frog facts on your hiking form this year.

To participate, download your **Wild Hikes form**, and complete hikes before December 31st to earn a hiking staff and/or a 2023 Wild Hikes medallion. Dogs can earn rewards too!

Our office is open for rewards pick-ups. [Email Eric](#) to schedule a time to get your rewards.

Visit our website

