



*Photo Courtesy of
Bobbie Dawson*

Page 3 Maple Festival

Saturday, March 7 - 10 am to 4 pm
McLean Teddy Bear Park

Page 8 Summer Day Camps

Mark your calendars now for Summer Day
Camps! Registration begins May 5.

Page 10 & 11 Volunteer Opportunities

Training sessions with the Nature
Education Department and Natural Resource
Department



Director's Corner

Director

Tyler Black

Board of Commissioners

Robert K. Antibus

Kevin P. Bruin

Donna M. Creamer

Office Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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Tyler Black -
Executive Director

A Look Ahead: Projects and Events in 2026

We have several exciting projects happening across the park district, including a brand-new area planned to open in 2026. This new natural area will cover about 50 acres and include hiking trails, ponds, and scenic views along the Auglaize River. Updates also continue to progress at Ottawa Metro Park. The area around the old swim beach is expected to reopen later this spring or early summer for fishing and non-swimming water recreation. We're still working through fishing regulations, and fencing around the area will be removed to make access easier.

In addition to these updates, we have several improvement projects planned throughout your parks. Ottawa Metro Park will see paving upgrades, shelter roofs in various parks will be replaced, and new signage will be installed to help visitors better navigate and enjoy the

parks. These updates are all part of our ongoing efforts to keep our parks safe, accessible, and enjoyable for everyone.

We're also already planning ahead for two favorite events in 2026. Maple Festival will be held on March 7th at McLean Teddy Bear Park from 10 am to 4 pm. It will include hands-on activities, interpretive stops, and a look at the history of maple syrup production. Finally, Apple Festival returns to the Lauer Historical Farm the first weekend in October, featuring family-friendly activities, live music, and food trucks.

We look forward to another year of serving you and growing our parks together.

Yours in servant leadership,

Tyler Black
Executive Director



It's "Maple Sugarin' Time" Maple Festival

Saturday, March 7

10 am to 4 pm

McLean Teddy Bear Park
2004 N. Dixie Hwy., Lima, OH



This is a great opportunity to learn and experience the process of making maple syrup in Ohio at our sugar bush!

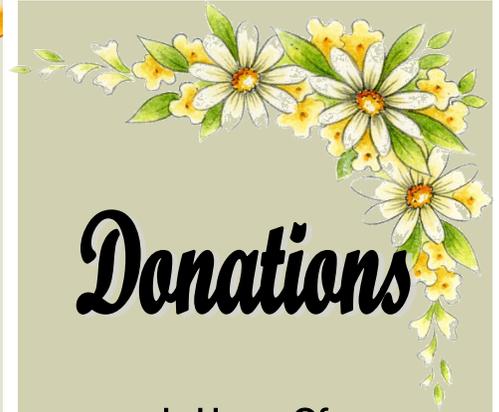
Interact with interpreters, take an educational hike, enjoy local food trucks, take home some goodies, and more!



Big Birding Day!

Join us on **Monday, May 18th** as we visit some of the hottest birding locations in the world, right here in Northwest Ohio! May is peak migration for songbirds, and you'll have a wonderful and unique opportunity to view these birds from close range and with expert guidance from our Naturalists. Our birding trip will begin with the boardwalk at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area and may also include the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge driving tour, Howard Marsh, and more! A carpool of Park District vehicles will depart at 6:30 am from the McElroy Environmental Education Center located at 2355 Ada Road. We will take the morning to explore Magee Marsh then visit neighboring locations in the

afternoon. Experienced and beginning birders are welcome! Appropriate clothing/footwear, binoculars, sun protection, lunch/snacks/beverages, and field guides are recommended. A limited number of binoculars and field guides will be provided. For more information contact Marie Walton at mwalton@jampd.com. Be sure to register early for a seat in the van! Register by May 15.



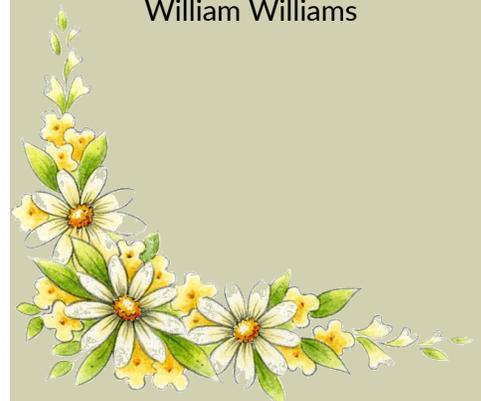
Donations

In Honor Of

Charlotte Apfelbeck
Jan Heinrich
Lima Host Club

In Memory Of

Kathy R. Bowman
Ruth Bruin
Roger Burnfield
Carolyn Corey
Donald C. Dunbar
Dick & Judy Evans
Diane Hoffman
Marty Hutchinson
Betty J. Moening
Dale & AnnaRuth
Reichenbach
Helen Staas
Jimmie L. Steed
Nancy Steiner
William Williams



Naturalist Notebook

“Spring Wildlife Babies: What to do if you find one!”

Spring brings rain showers, blooming flowers, and one of the most incredible sights of nature: wildlife babies. From wobbly fawns to fledgling birds, young animals will start to be everywhere. Sometimes these young animals will be sighted on their own, and while it is natural to feel concern for them when they are alone, most of the time they are not actually abandoned or in danger.

One of the most commonly “rescued” animals in springtime is the white-tailed deer fawn. Newborn fawns spend their first few weeks hiding away in protected areas while their mothers forage for food somewhere else. For the first few weeks of their lives, fawns are scentless. This defense makes it so no predators can smell out the fawn, and they are safe for this period. Even though the fawn is scentless, the mother is not. This is why fawns are so often found alone in the wild. The mothers will leave their babies alone for hours at a time to keep any scents away and keep them safe from predators. The mother will return to feed the fawn, though infrequently, to guarantee their safety and survival.

Fledglings are also commonly seen on their own. They can be identified as fledglings due to their fluffy or scruffy looking patches of feathers. These young birds are done with their nest but are still working on flying. They will often flutter around for



short distances and spend a lot of time on low branches or on the ground. They are learning essential skills in these moments and are not often alone. Their parents are usually nearby, watching them and bringing food when needed. Without these learning moments, these young birds would never be able to survive in the wild on their own.

Eastern Cottontail kits are another young animal that are often found alone. However, these babies are not just out and about alone, they are still in their nest when found. Rabbits will often make nests for their young in lawns, gardens, flower beds, or grassy fields. These are commonly visited areas by humans too, and this is why these nests are spotted so often. Baby rabbits are born blind, hairless, and extremely vulnerable, and their best form of defense is staying still and quiet. This is why mother rabbits do not stay with their young in the nests. The adult would attract attention to the nest and lead predators right to the babies. The mother rabbit visits the nest only a couple times a day to feed her babies, usually at dawn and dusk, and the rest of the day she is doing her best to keep them safe.

When encountering a baby animal, the most important thing we can do is leave it alone. Although it may feel right to help, intervening can cause more harm than good. The best way to help is to give the baby plenty of



space and try to keep people and pets away from them. Stress and disturbance cause the parent to avoid returning, putting the baby at risk. Leaving the baby exactly where you find it is the best thing you can do for them because they are usually exactly where they are supposed to be. Parent animals will leave their babies in a specific location and know how to return to them. If the baby is moved the adult will no longer know how to find them, and this can lead to abandonment.

The only time to intervene is when you can visibly see that the baby is in immediate danger. This would include if the baby is in a road and at risk of being hit, if they are visibly injured in some way, or if you know for a fact that the adult is deceased and the young cannot care for itself. Wild animals are remarkably adapted to survive without human intervention. By knowing the normal behavior of animals and responding thoughtfully, we can help give wildlife babies the best chance they have to grow up healthy and wild.

Haley Williams

Naturalist

Nature Education Department



Spring Programs

March, April, May

If program description indicates registration required, please register online at jampd.com or by calling 419-221-1232.

PARKS LEGEND

ACF	Allen County Farm Park
ATA	Antibus Trail Access
AR	Agerter Road River Access
DC	Deep Cut Historical Park
FA	Fort Amanda Park
HP/WE	Heritage Park/West Entrance
HP/EE	Heritage Park/East Entrance
HR	Haver Ridge
HW	Hermon Woodlands Metro Park
KW	Kendrick Woods
KW/CTA	Kendrick Woods/Cottonwood Trail Access
KW/EAR	Kendrick Woods/Evans Archery Range
LBS	Lippincott Bird Sanctuary
LHF	Lauer Historical Farm
MEEC	McElroy Environmental Education Center
MMP	Motter Metro Park
MTB	McLean Teddy Bear Park
OMP	Ottawa Metro Park
OMP/AMP	Ottawa Metro Park/Amphitheater
OMP/CG	Ottawa Metro Park/Campground
OMP/LL	Ottawa Metro Park/Lima Lake

March

WOODBURNING

Mon., Mar. 2 – 6:30 pm – MEEC

Take your woodcarving to the next level and join the Lima Area Woodcarvers to explore woodburning! Experts will demonstrate proper use of adjustable wood burning tools and ex-

plore a variety of techniques as they share their skills and equipment. Registration is limited to 10 participants, ages 13 and up; participants under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Register by March 1.

HOMESCHOOL HIKING CLUB

Tues., Mar. 3 – 10 am – MTB

Come hit the trail with us and discover the wonders of nature! Homeschool Hiking Club invites families with children ages 6 – 10 on a monthly hike to connect with nature, engage with their community, and explore the forest ecosystem in each season. Dress for the weather and come out rain or shine! Meet at the Hornung Shelter. Register by March 2.

WEEKLY WALKS

Wed., Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25 - 9 am - HW

Enjoy the quiet spring mornings while we get in our steps! After a long winter it is time to enjoy the nice weather again. Join a Naturalist as we walk the trails of Herman Woodlands. Together we can achieve our fitness goals while also enjoying nature. All ages are welcome, and we can set our own pace. Dress for the weather, rain, snow, or shine! Register the day before each walk.

HOWL @ THE MOON: WORM MOON

Wed., Mar. 4 – 7:30 pm – KW

Across time, people all over the world have utilized the moon to track the seasons. Giving each full moon a special name was one way to honor nature's signs and traditions. Experience the outdoors under the light of the full moon and learn about the names and folklore associated with March's full moon. Meet at the Hickory Shelter. Registration is required to participate in this program. Register by March 3.

NATURE PALS: FIVE SENSES SCAVENGER HUNT

Thurs., Mar. 5 – 10 am OR 1 pm – MEEC

Fri., Mar. 6 – 10 am OR 1 pm – MEEC

Children ages 3-5 along with an adult companion are invited to come explore the woods together using our 5 senses! Bundle up for some winter exploration. Registration required by March 4.



MAPLE FESTIVAL

Sat. Mar. 7 – 10 am – 4 pm - MTB

See the article on page 3 to learn more about this event and check out the volunteer opportunities on page 10 to lend a helping hand in making our event a success!

HOMESCHOOL FIELD TRIP: MAPLE SYRUPING

Wed., Mar. 18 - 9 am OR 1 pm - MEEC

Join us for our interdisciplinary nature-based program that explores the history of maple syrup production in Ohio from tree to table! Children ages 8 to 11 and their families will learn from Nature Education staff and curriculum-based activities that maple syrup production has changed over time and across cultures as materials and techniques evolved. Registration is required to participate in this program. Please register all family members who will be attending the program. Register by March 11.



MARCH (cont'd)

HEALTH THROUGH NATURE

Thurs., Mar. 19 – 5:30 pm - HP/WE

Although modern technologies are making our lives easier, more people are experiencing a sense of unease and anxiety. New scientific research concludes our disconnect from nature may be the cause. Scientists are finding that a connection to the natural world is crucial for our health and well-being. Join a Certified Natural Mindfulness Guide on Thursday evenings each month this spring to reap the health benefits of being in nature and enjoy exploring the seasonality of our new venue this year at Heritage Park! Meet at the Veterans Shelter. Register by March 18.



DUKE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY!

Wed., Mar 25 – 5 pm to 6:30 pm – MEEC

Come out to explore the McElroy Environmental Education Center and celebrate one of the park's most charismatic employees – Duke the sulcata tortoise! Duke is an education animal who has worked with many of the citizens of Allen County helping us teach people about reptiles. There will be tortoise trivia, crafts, and even cake! Duke will be roaming around to accept gentle pats on his shell and happy birthday wishes from his guests. This event is open to people of all ages and abilities. Register by March 23.

FEEDING DAY

Thur., Mar. 26 – 4 pm – MEEC

The Park District maintains several education animals in the McElroy Environmental Education Center, using them throughout the year for nature presentations and programs. Join the Critter Care volunteers to watch (or help!) them clean and feed all our animals at 4 pm on the last Thursday of the month! Register by March 25.

SUNRISE HIKE

Sat., Mar. 28 – 7 am – MMP

Did you know there are animals that are more active during dawn and dusk than any other parts of the day? During our quiet sunrise hike we could have the perfect opportunity to see some of these animals before they hide away for the day. Join us for a one-hour hike to watch the sunrise and keep an eye out for any early morning animals. Registration is required to participate in this program. Register by March 26.

APRIL

WEEKLY WALKS

April 1, 8, 15, 22 – 9 am - HW

See March Weekly Walk description.
Register the day before each walk.

INVERTEBRATE INVESTIGATION

April 1 – 6 pm – Lima Public Library

Make no bones about it – spineless critters that creep and crawl are super cool! Join a Naturalist to discover how animals are classified and explore invertebrate individuals upclose. Register by March 31.

NATURE PALS: MEET REAL LIFE FROG AND TOAD!

Thurs., April 2 - 10 am

OR 1 pm - MEEC

Fri., April 3- 10 am OR 1 pm – MEEC

The Frog and Toad series, both written and illustrated by Arnold Lobel, has captured the hearts of generations with its themes of friendship and patience. Children ages 3-5 along with an adult companion are invited to come read a story, do crafts together, and learn about the real animals that inspired these characters. Come dressed for a hike in the woods. Registration required by April 1.



HOWL @ THE MOON: PINK MOON

Thurs., April 2 - 8 pm – KW

See March 4 program description. Registration is required to participate in this program. Register by April 1.

WOODCARVING: SUN FACE

Mon., April 6 – 6:30 pm – MEEC

With help from the Lima Area Woodcarvers, this is a project that can be enjoyed by all skill levels, beginners included! Registration is limited to 10 participants, ages 13 and up; participants under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Register by April 5.

HOMESCHOOL HIKING CLUB

Tues., April 7 – 10 am – MTB

See March 3 program description. Register by April 6.

HEALTH THROUGH NATURE

Thurs., April 16 – 5:30 pm - HP/WE

See March 19 program description.
Register by April 15.

KIDS KRAFTS

Sat., April 18 – 10 am – MEEC

Does your child love crafting? We love it too! Bring your crafter to our McElroy Environmental Education Center for one hour of creative nature craft time. General crafting supplies for the activity will be provided, but if you have any special crafting items you like to use feel free to bring them along. Registration is limited to children ages 7 and up. Register by April 17.

KAHOOT TRIVIA NIGHT

Tues., April 21 – 5 pm – MEEC

Calling all bird nerds! Bring your smartphones and play some Kahoot! with us for some fun bird trivia. Each person will need their own device and will need to either access the Kahoot! website or have the app downloaded before the program. There will be multiple different sessions that include various bird topics during our one-hour of game play. Register by April 20.

SUNRISE HIKE

Sat., April 25 – 6:15 am – HR

See March 28 program description.
Registration is required to participate in this program. Register by April 23.

APRIL (cont'd)

NATURE 101: BAT BASICS

Tues., April 28 – 5 pm -MEEC

When you hear the word migration what type of animal do you first think of?

Most of us would say birds, but did you know some bats are also migrating back to Ohio in the spring? Join us at the McElroy Environmental Education Center for a one-hour presentation about the basics of bats and why some migrate while others hibernate. This presentation is intended for an adult audience, but children are welcome to join as well. Register by May 19.



BEGINNING ARCHERY

Wed., April 29 – 5 pm to 6 pm *OR* 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm – ACF

Enjoy the great outdoors while learning a new skill! Participants ages 9 to adult are invited to join us on the range to explore this unique recreational sport. Certified archery instructors will lead participants in proper shooting technique while developing consistency and accuracy in their shot. All materials will be provided by the park district; participants must use the equipment provided. Wear closed-toe shoes and secure long hair. Please register for only one evening session. Register by April 28.

FEEDING DAY

Thurs., April 30 – 4 pm – MEEC

See March 26 program description.
Register by April 29.

MAY

HOWL @ THE MOON: FLOWER MOON

Fri., May 1– 8:30 pm – KW

See March 4 program description. Registration is required to participate in this program. Register by April 30.

NATURE DIY: BEST NESTS

Sat., May 2 – 11 am – MEEC

Let's give our feathered friends a helping hand this spring! We'll learn how birds build and use nests during a brief presentation, then craft handmade nesting balls for our backyard birds. All ages and skill levels are welcome! Register by May 1.

AN OCEAN OF BLUE WILDFLOWERS

Sun., May 3 – 2 pm – HR

Imagine being in the forest surrounded by beautiful blue wildflowers – what it would look like, smell like, and feel like? You can find out! Experience this hidden gem of Allen County as we hike to find the wild hyacinth grove of Haver Ridge. Wear sturdy/mud-resistant footwear. Register by May 1.



WOODCARVING: MINIATURE CHRISTMAS TREE

Mon., May 4 – 6:30 pm – MEEC

With help from the Lima Area Woodcarvers, this is a project that can be enjoyed by all skill levels, beginners included! Registration is limited to 10 participants, ages 13 and up; participants under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Register by May 3.

HOMESCHOOL HIKING CLUB

Tues., May 5 – 10 am – MEEC*

See March 3 program description.
*Note location. Register by May 4.

WEEKLY WALKS

May 6, 13 – 9 am – HW

See March Weekly Walk description.
Register the day before each walk.

NATURE PALS: BEAUTIFUL BOX TURTLES

Thurs., May 7 - 10 am *OR* 1 pm - MEEC

Fri., May 8 - 10 am *OR* 1 pm - MEEC

What are box turtles, and what makes them special? Children ages 3-5 along with an adult companion are invited to come learn about these terrific turtles! Come dressed for a hike in the woods. Registration required by May 6.



HOMESCHOOL FIELD TRIP:

GIVIN' A LIVIN'

Wed., May 13 - 9:30 am *OR* 1 pm - MTB

Join us for our interdisciplinary nature-based program focused on the characteristics of living things! Children ages 4 to 6 and their families will learn from Nature Education staff and curriculum-based activities that people, plants, and animals are all living things and share important features. Meet at the Horning Shelter. Registration is required. Please register all family members who will be attending the program. Register by May 6.

BIG BIRDING DAY!

Mon., May 18 – 6:30 am – MEEC

See the article on page 3 to learn more about this unique field trip event with Naturalists from the Park District! Registration is required to participate in this program. Register by May 15.

HEALTH THROUGH NATURE

Thurs., May 21 – 5:30 pm - HP/WE

See March 19 program description.
Register by May 20.

SUNRISE HIKE

Sat., May 23 – 5:30 am – MTB

See March 28 program description.
Registration is required to participate in this program. Register by May 21.



BEGINNING ARCHERY

Wed., May 27 – 5 pm to 6 pm
OR 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm – ACF

See April 29 program description.
Register by May 26.

FEEDING DAY

Thurs., May 28 – 4 pm – MEEC

See March 26 program description.
Register by May 27.



Metro Park Adventures

Summer Day Camps

Mark your calendars now for our summer youth day camp series. Each day camp is a unique nature-based program experience designed specifically for that age group. There are three age groups: Metropark Trailblazers are for ages 5 & 6, Metropark Discoverers are for ages 7 to 9, and Metropark Explorers are for ages 10 & up (varies by camp). Camps include nature walks, outdoor skills, games, crafts and much more. More day camp details will be available soon. **Registration begins May 5 online at jampd.com or by calling the Park Office at 419-221-1232.** *Limited space available. Programs that do not meet minimum registration requirements are subject to cancellation. All programs are weather dependent and may be cancelled in the event of inclement weather.*

METROPARK TRAILBLAZERS (ages 5-6)

Color Crazy

Tues. & Wed., June 2-3
9 am to 12 pm *OR* 1pm to 4 pm
Location: McElroy Center

Nature Superheroes!

Tues. & Wed., July 28-29 *OR* Thurs. & Fri., July 30-31
10 am to 1 pm
Location: McLean Teddy Bear Park

METROPARK DISCOVERERS (ages 7-9)

Super Survivors

Mon. & Tues., June 15 -16
OR Wed. & Thurs., June 17 & 18
10 am to 1 pm
Location: Hermon Woodlands - West Shelter

Creature Quest

Wed. & Thurs., July 1 & 2
9 am to 12 pm *OR* 1 pm to 4 pm
Location: McElroy Center

METROPARK EXPLORERS (ages 10+)

Bullseye Basics Archery Camp (ages 10 - 16)

Tues. & Wed., June 3-4 *OR* Thurs. & Fri., June 5 & 6
8 am to 11 am
Location: Allen County Farm Park

Next Level Archers (ages 11 - 16)

Two years of JAMPD Archery Camp required
Tues. & Wed. , June 3 - 4 *OR* Thurs. & Fri., June 5 - 6
12 pm to 3 pm
Location: Allen County Farm Park

Kayak Quest (ages 13-15)

Tues. & Wed., July 14 - 15
9 am to 12 pm
Location: OMP Erie Shelter

Kayak Adventures (ages 16-18)

Thurs., & Fri., July 16-17
9 am to 1 pm
Location: Ottawa Metro Park Lima Lake



Cooperative Park Improvement Grant Program (CPIGP)

Continues to Make an Impact

The Cooperative Park Improvement Grant Program (CPIGP) continues to make an impact on village and city parks in Allen County. The CPIGP was started in 1994 and to date has awarded over \$2 million dollars to help build playgrounds, restrooms, shelters, baseball diamonds and more in the twelve eligible political subdivisions.

Each eligible political subdivision appoints a representative by their legislative body to be on the CPIGP Review Team. On December 11, 2025 the grant review

team met to review the grant applications submitted from seven political subdivisions and select projects for funding. Projects are selected for funding by:

- 1) Health and Safety Issues
- 2) Major Repairs to Upgrade Existing Facilities
- 3) New Outdoor Recreation Needs
- 4) Special Opportunities (Grants, Emergencies, Joint Efforts, Etc.)

The Park District Commissioners approved a total of \$153,150.00/ year revenue sharing for 2026 provided by the Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District.

Campground To Open For Season

Ottawa Metro Park Campground at 2632 Ada Road, will open on Friday, April 17 at 8 am and remain open through Sunday, October 18, 2026.

- 30 family campsites with 3 handicap accessible sites on a first-come, first served basis. Each site has water, electric, picnic table, and fire ring.
- Campsites can be occupied by a maximum of 2 tents, or 1 tent and 1 mobile camping unit.
- Cost per night is \$35
- \$30 per night (Seniors 60+ with proper ID)

Summary of 2026 Awarded Grants

Village of Bluffton \$25,000.00 * Construct shelter & restroom area at Legacy Park	City of Lima \$32,000.00 * Refurbish and purchase new skateboard park equipment
City of Delphos \$32,462.00 * Concrete sidewalk & parking area at Leisure Park	Spencer Township Park District \$7,030.00 * Tree removal & electrical upgrades to shelter & flagpole
Jackson Township Park District \$21,000.00 * Re-roofing main shelter, renovate existing shelter into maintenance/storage building	Sugar Creek Township \$34,658.00 * New concrete, gutters & trash cans for shelters



Volunteer Opportunities

With the Nature Education Dept.



MAPLE FEST

Sat, Mar. 7 – 10 am to 4 pm – MTB

Join the Park District as the community comes together to learn about and experience the process of making maple syrup! Lend a hand as you assist with various activities and interpretive stations throughout the day. Look for specific opportunities on the Volunteer Portal, VicNet, and register by March 2.

WILDFLOWER MONITOR TRAINING

Mon., Mar. 9– 2:30 pm OR 5:30 pm
Park Office Conference Room
1682 Slabtown Road

Do you enjoy hiking in the woods and looking at beautiful flowers? Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District has a volunteer opportunity for you! Wildflower monitoring data helps us assess the vegetation in our parks and contributes to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources annual bloom reports. We can't do it without people like you! At this session we will train you and give you all the information you need to be a wildflower monitor for the 2026 wildflower monitoring season. This is a commitment to walk your assigned track once per week between the hours of dawn and dusk, April through May, and record the wildflowers that you see. If you would like to learn more about this volunteer opportunity and receive training in identifying wildflowers, please attend this informational session. Register on the Volunteer Portal, VicNet, by March 6. If you cannot attend the meeting but are interested in helping this year, please let us know by calling 419-221-1232 or contacting Marie Walton at mwalton@jampd.com.



CRITTER CARE VOLUNTEERS

Thursdays, at 4 pm – MEEC

The Park District maintains several live animals as ambassadors for environmental education. Mostly reptiles and amphibians, these animals need to be cared for and that's where you come in! We're looking for excited teenage volunteers to help with our Critter Care program. We tend to the animals in the MEEC on Thursdays at 4 pm. Each volunteer will be required to attend a training session stressing animal care and sanitary standards, which includes a volunteer manual. For more information contact Marie Walton at mwalton@jampd.com

BUTTERFLY MONITORING

Thurs, Mar. 12– 2:30 pm OR 5:30 pm
Park Office Conference Room
1682 Slabtown Road

The Ohio Lepidopterists Society has been monitoring butterflies throughout Ohio for 29 years. Butterfly monitoring is an excellent way to measure change in the environment over time and the Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District has been contributing data towards this state-wide initiative since 2012. We need people like you to hike the trails and record the butterflies that you see along the way. We submit the data you collect. It's a fun way to enjoy the outdoors, learn more about nature, and contribute to scientific knowledge! If you are interested in learning how you can help, please attend this informational session. Register on the Volunteer Portal, VicNet, by March 11. If you cannot attend the meeting but are interested in helping this year, please let us know by calling 419-221-1232 or contacting Marie Walton at mwalton@jampd.com.



KINDERGARTEN FIELDTRIP TRAINING

Wed, April 29 – 9 am to 12 pm – MTB

The Park District's "Givin' a Livin'" field trip is an interdisciplinary nature-based program focused on the characteristics of living things. Volunteers assist Nature Education Staff as student groups rotate to various stations along the trails of McLean Teddy Bear Park. Please join us on April 29, 9 am to 12 pm, for an in-depth training. Register on the Volunteer Portal, VicNet, by April 28.

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH

Tuesdays and Wednesdays,
Nov. 1 through April 30 - MEEC

Project FeederWatch is a citizen science survey of birds that visit feeders across North America during winter and early spring. The collected data helps scientists track movements of winter bird populations and discern long term trends in bird distribution and abundance. FeederWatch volunteers here at the Park District participate in self-guided bird counts each Tuesday and Wednesday to record bird species and numbers that visit the feeders outside the McElroy Environmental Education Center. For more information contact Lindsey Gallagher at lgallagher@jampd.com

PROGRAM ASSISTANT

We would love your help, volunteers! The Park District delivers a variety of public programs throughout the year that often require an extra set of eyes or an extra pair of helping hands. Check out the VicNet calendar of volunteer opportunities to see what we're up to in any season. Perhaps you have an interest in early childhood education and can assist with our Nature Pals program or maybe you have a knack for crafting and can assist with our Nature DIY programs. We also have opportunities for trail assistants and hike cabooses. There's sure to be something you're interested in on our VicNet calendar. Check it out and sign up today!

Volunteer Opportunities

With the Natural Resource Dept.



SAVE THE WILDFLOWERS

Help us save our beautiful spring wildflowers from garlic mustard and dame's rocket, invasive weeds from Europe. Pulling will take place Mondays, Thursdays, and some Wednesdays starting on April 2nd through May 28th. Volunteer shifts will be from 8 am - 11 am and 12 pm -2:30/3 pm. Work takes place off trail, so be prepared for mud. Sign up for shifts in the Volunteer Portal, VicNet. Locations are subject to change, and anyone registered through VicNet will be emailed. If you have questions, please contact the Natural Resources Department at naturalresources@jampd.com or 419-221-1232. If you have any sturdy woven plastic bags to put the pulled mustard in, please bring them along or donate at the park office.

Garlic Mustard Pull Locations

- KW - April 2, 8, & 20, May 4, 14, & 20
- HW - April 6, 13 & 30, May 18
- HR - April 9 & 22, May 6 & 21
- ACF - April 16 & May 11 (am)
- MTB - April 2 & May 11 (pm)
- OMP/LHF - April 27
- MMP - May 7
- Location TBD - May 28

OFF TRAIL INVASIVE SPECIES MONITORS

The Natural Resources Department is looking for volunteers to monitor specific invasive species in Kendrick Woods, Haver Ridge, Heritage Park and Lippincott Bird Sanctuary. Interested individuals will need to attend a Landscape training in order to monitor and must be comfortable going off trail self-directed. Please email naturalresources@jampd.com to sign up or ask questions.



EASTERN BLUEBIRD NESTBOX & PURPLE MARTIN MONITORING

The Natural Resource department will be holding a Bluebird and Purple Martin Monitoring meeting at the park office on March 18th at 3 pm in the Conference Room at 1682 Slabtown Rd. This is for all current monitors, and anyone interested in becoming a monitor for the Eastern bluebird boxes located in our parks. Monitors must be able to walk over uneven ground and be prepared for wet conditions in spring. To monitor the Purple martins, you must also be able to lower and raise the boxes using a crank winch. The nest boxes are checked once a week from late March/early April until the end of August. New monitors can take any available routes, pair with a seasoned monitor, or offer to monitor routes when assigned individuals are unavailable. Training information will be shared, and monitoring materials will be supplied. Please rsvp for this event at www.jampd.com or 419-221-1232 or sign up in VicNet. If you are interested in helping, but cannot attend the training, contact Landon Gossard at lgossard@jampd.com or call the office.

*Available routes include the bluebird boxes at Lippincott Bird Sanctuary and Motter Metro Park.

NATIVE GARDEN CARETAKER

The Natural Resources Department will be holding weeding sessions at the Schick Memorial Garden at Ottawa Metro Park two Wednesday mornings a month from 8 am to 12 pm in April and May. The garden is located just west of the hill and contains a variety of native plants to help promote pollinators. Sign up for shifts in the Volunteer Portal, VicNet.

Schick Memorial Garden Weeding Sessions

- April - 15 and 29
- May - 13 and 27

GREENHOUSE HELP

We are looking for helpers to water plants and transplant seedlings from germination trays into individual pots. Familiarity with growing plants and distinguishing one plant from another is preferred. Volunteers will work with a Natural Resource staff member for the first time or two. Afterwards, volunteers may work self-directed. All watering and planting will take place at the Lauer Historical Farm. Volunteer shifts will be listed in the Volunteer Portal, VicNet. A shift will be listed for each day of the week. Any shifts not filled will be cared for by Natural Resources staff. The majority of the shifts will be watering only.

MONITORING APP TRAINING

Volunteers who are currently helping the Education department or the Natural Resources department with monitoring or are interested in helping with a variety of monitoring programs such as wildflowers, bluebirds, and invasive species are invited to attend a training session to learn to use Landscape. This is a monitoring app to help collect information. Participants will need an email address and a smartphone or tablet to use during data collection. Please RSVP to attend one of the two training times offered. New monitors will be sent a welcome email prior to the training to gain access to the full program and complete log-in information on both a computer and their smart phone/tablet. This training is required for anyone new to monitoring using Landscape and it is suggested for returning monitors who want to refresh their memories. RSVP at www.jampd.com or 419-221-1232 or sign up on VicNet. For more information or help with troubleshooting, contact Anne Smedley at asmedley@jampd.com or call the office.

Landscape App Trainings

- March 21 at 10 am
- March 25 at 3 pm
- Location - Park District Conference

