

The Sandusky Plains

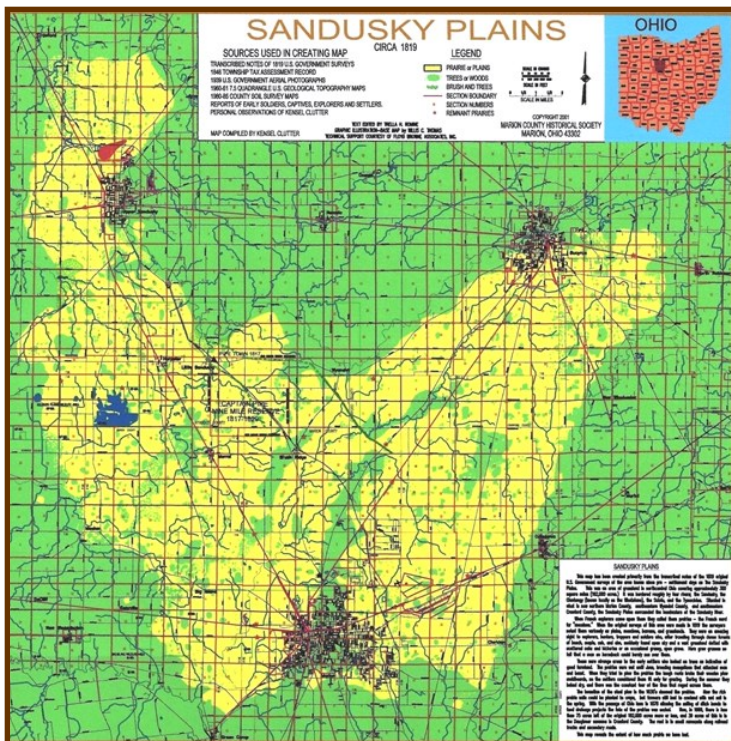
It has been said that prior to European settlement, a squirrel could go from Ohio's eastern border to the western border without touching the ground. While this may have been true for many parts of Ohio, North-central Ohio was a different story: a squirrel would have gotten to Crawford County and would have had to abandon its arboreal ways.

The Sandusky Plains were one of the few remaining prairie areas left in Ohio when settlers arrived. This vast prairie encompassed over 200,000 acres in Crawford, Marion, and Wyandot Counties. Marion County boasted the largest percentage; Crawford County had the smallest acreage at around 30,000—about 12% of the county's 403 square miles. The Sandusky Plains lay south and west of the Sandusky River, bordered by the Olentangy River to the east, and the Tymochtee Creek to the west, and extended south to the present-day city of Marion.

Early French explorers were awed by the immense grasslands that covered much of the Midwest. With no word for these beautiful vistas,



Big Bluestem with Bur Oaks at
Daughmer Prairie Savannah



Kensel Clutter created this map from government surveys conducted in the early 1800s. This map can be viewed at LVP.

the French ascribed the term they used for meadows: "prairies". Prairies are very different than a meadow, however. Dominated by special grasses like Big Bluestem, Indian Grass, or Switchgrass (among others), prairies were also peppered with colorful wildflowers (known as forbs) such as Gray-headed Coneflower, Prairie Dock, Dense Blazingstar, and Sawtooth Sunflower. While these species typify a prairie landscape, over 400 grasses and forbs have been documented within Ohio's prairies.

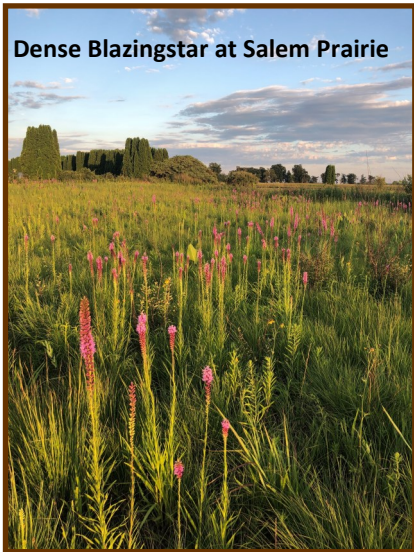
So how did these prairies become part of Ohio's landscape? One must look back into Ohio's prehistory, specifically post-glaciation. After the last glacial event (known as the Wisconsinan Glaciation), Ohio's climate was cool and moist. This gave rise to a boreal forest landscape. However, around 8,000 years ago, the climate became warmer and drier, a period known as the Hypsithermal. This change in climate allowed for the western prairies to expand eastward, extending far into Pennsylvania and was referred to as the Prairie Peninsula. Then yet again, after another 4,000 years, the climate became a little cooler and moister. This allowed for the eastern deciduous forest we are familiar with today, though a few remnant prairies remained.

PARK NEWS

An important factor that allowed prairies to remain on Ohio's landscape was man. Indigenous peoples were very aware that if left alone, prairies would eventually revert to thick growth, making hunting and travelling difficult. To combat natural succession, they would light the prairies on fire. Not only did the burning hold back the reversion to forest, it also brought forth fresh vegetation that attracted game animals, particularly deer and to some degree, bison. Had the Indigenous peoples not burned the Sandusky Plains, it would have become part of the eastern deciduous forest.

As early explorers and settlers entered Crawford County from the east, they had travelled through a very expansive forest. Moving westward, they were surprised to find a break in the dark forests from which they came. With the sun suddenly shining down on them, they took in this new landscape with awe, much like the early French explorers. With grasses so tall, it was remarked that a man on horseback riding through the prairie appeared as if he was floating above the vegetation as the horse was hidden by the towering grasses. They were also intrigued by the towering Bur Oaks that dotted the prairie landscape. At various locations, groves of trees grew as well. Because the Sandusky Plains was so expansive, like a sea, these tree groves were called "islands". (Think of Big Island in Marion County; and Battle Island, in reference to the Crawford Expedition in Wyandot County.)

As civilization crept into Crawford County, so too crept in the demise of the Sandusky Plains. The dark, fertile soil was coveted by farmers, and soon the plow had broken up all but small remnants of the once mighty Sandusky Plains. Today, less than 100 acres remain. Most are small tracts along railroad rights-of-way (Salem Prairie on Lower-Leesville Rd. and Claridon Prairie along SR 98 in Marion County) and cemeteries. The largest tract is in Crawford County: Daughmer Prairie Savannah.



Dense Blazingstar at Salem Prairie



Big Bluestem: Mowed but not forgotten along SR 294



Gray-headed Coneflower along Mt. Zion Rd.



Sunflower species along Mt. Zion Rd.

You can visit Unger Park, Daughmer Prairie Savannah, and Harvey Schoolhouse Prairie to get a glimpse of what the Sandusky Plains would have looked like. As you traverse the backroads of Crawford County south of Bucyrus, you'll also see prairie relicts. Big Bluestem, Indian Grass, Sullivant's Milkweed, and Sawtooth Sunflowers spring up in our ditches offering us a small view of the former Sandusky Plains.

K9 "Nose" Best!

Richland County, Ohio Wildlife Officer Nathan Kaufmann is a 2014 graduate of the Wildlife Officer Academy, serving in Huron County since 2015 and transferring to Richland County in 2020. Officer Kaufmann is a graduate of Shelby High School in Richland County. In 2005, he received an Associate Degree in Fish and Wildlife Management from Hocking College. In 2008, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Fishery and Wildlife Management from the University of Idaho. He has been the handler of K9 Officer May since 2019.

Plan to join Officer Kaufmann at Lowe-Volk Park on Monday, September 27 at 6pm. He will be talking about what it takes to become a Wildlife Officer and a K9 handler for the Division of Wildlife. He will also have a demonstration of K9 May's abilities.



PROGRAMS

All programs are free of charge, unless otherwise noted. Please note that for some programs you must pre-register. For more information or questions about programs, call 419-683-9000, or visit www.crawfordparkdistrict.org

September

Homeschool in Nature: Stream Study

Thurs, Sept. 2 9am, 11am & 2pm Lowe-Volk Park

To kick off the school year, we are going to do a stream study to check for macroinvertebrates. Bring your boots or water shoes and prepare to get in the water. Dress for the weather. Call the Park District at 419-683-9000 to reserve a spot for your 5-12-year-old.

Monarch Tagging

Wednesday, September 8 5pm

Buckeye Central Outdoor Learning Lab

Learn about the life cycle of the Monarch butterfly, its need for milkweed plants, and their amazing migration to Mexico. You will have an opportunity to help Kansas University with Monarch migration and population research by attempting to capture, tag, and release Monarch butterflies. All ages welcome. Nets will be provided.

Catchin' Crawdads

Saturday, September 11 4pm Lowe-Volk Park

Join Naturalist Abby for a favorite childhood adventure of catching "crawdads", or crayfish, down by the river. Come ready to learn about these lobster relatives and to get your feet wet while we turn over rocks to find our local crustaceans. Please wear closed-toe water shoes or boots and dress for the weather as the event will happen rain or shine unless the river is flooded. Nets and containers will be provided.



Caterpillar Hunt

Saturday, September 11 8-11pm Lowe-Volk Park

Did you know that many caterpillars glow under UV light and that some can grow to the size of a small sausage?! Join Naturalists Kyle & Chelsea to learn about the fascinating world of caterpillars. When darkness falls, we will use UV lights and flashlights to search for caterpillars and other nocturnally active creatures in our park. We'll also have a mothing sheet up to see which magnificent moths are flying in late summer. Fun for all ages!

Monarch Tagging

Wednesday, September 15 6pm Unger Park

Learn about the life cycle of the Monarch butterfly, its need for milkweed plants, and their amazing migration to Mexico.

You will have an opportunity to help Kansas University with Monarch migration and population research by attempting to capture, tag, and release Monarch butterflies. All ages welcome. Nets will be provided.

Fall Migration Bird Banding

Friday, September 17 8am-12pm Lowe-Volk Park

Bander Bob Placier will bring his mist nets and feeder traps to see which birds are passing through Lowe-Volk Park on their journey southward. Join Bob and CPD staff for a fun morning learning all about our migratory birds. Stop by for a little bit or stay for the duration as we attempt to capture and band our 400th bird at Lowe-Volk Park.



Birding Basics

Saturday, September 18 8am Heckert NP

Curious about birding, but don't know how to get involved? Join Land Manager and Naturalist Kyle Bailey for an interactive, family-friendly program suitable for all ages. Autumn is gearing up and fall migration is in full swing. This program will focus on birding basics such as learning how to identify common Ohio species, when and where to bird, how to bird, what to look for, and much more! Please bring binoculars or cameras to better view the birds.

Fungus Among Us

Saturday, September 18 11am Lowe-Volk Park

There is an abundance of fungus among us! Ohio has an amazing amount of fungus diversity with upwards of 2,000 species. Some are edible when prepared properly, but some are poisonous. Come learn how to properly identify these fun-to-search-for-and-eat natural treats with Land Manager and Naturalist Kyle Bailey!

Seed Collection

Sunday, September 19 12pm-2pm Unger Park

Come out to Unger Park for the first annual Prairie Seed Collection event. Seed collection aids the CPD in creating new prairies or bolstering plant populations in established prairies. Land Manager Kyle Bailey will assist you with plant and seed identification. Bring paper bags to collect seeds, hand pruners, and gloves. Participants will get to take some seeds home to establish their own native prairie garden.



PROGRAMS



September

Monarch Tagging

Tuesday, September 21 5pm Lowe-Volk Park

Learn about the life cycle of the Monarch butterfly, its need for milkweed plants, and their amazing migration to Mexico. You will have an opportunity to help Kansas University with Monarch migration and population research by attempting to capture, tag, and release Monarch butterflies. All ages welcome. Nets will be provided.

Canoeing

Thursday, September 23 5-7pm Neff Reservoir

Stop out for an evening paddle around Neff Reservoir. After a lesson on canoeing basics and safety, we will send you out on the water! You will need to wear shoes that can get wet. No registration required, but it will be first come, first served.

Sandusky River Clean Sweep

Saturday, September 25 9am-12pm Lowe-Volk Park

Volunteer to help remove trash from the Sandusky River! Join CPD staff and the Sandusky River Watershed Coalition on a joint stewardship project working to beautify our very own scenic section of the Sandusky River. All volunteers are welcome, but must register prior to the event. Please dress to be in the stream with closed-toe footwear, sunscreen, and bug spray suggested. Trash bags, gloves, and a light snack bag will be provided. See flier on page 13 for registration and other event details.

Pickin' Pawpaws

Saturday, September 25 1pm Carpenter's Bottom

"Pickin' up pawpaws, puttin' em in her pocket!" Take a hike with Naturalists Lisa and Chelsea to learn about and search for our largest native fruit... the Pawpaw! If the pickins are ripe and ready, we will have a tasty snack!

Caterpillar Hunt

Saturday, September 25 8-11pm Lowe-Volk Park

The Spicebush Swallowtail caterpillar is an incredible snake mimic! Can we find one munching on the spicebush in our woods? Join Naturalist Chelsea to learn about the fascinating world of caterpillars. When darkness falls, we will use UV lights and flashlights to search for caterpillars and other nocturnally active creatures in our park. Fun for all ages!



Feeding Day

Sunday, September 26 1pm Lowe-Volk Park

Will it be fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, shrimp, worms, or mice? Can you guess what's on the menu for the animals in the Nature Center? If you want to help feed some of the animals, call the Park District at 419-683-9000 to register.

Archery

Sunday, September 26 3-5pm Lowe-Volk Park

Whether for sport, food, or fun, archery is a great outdoor activity that gets us away from the gadgets of life, allowing us to focus on one thing: hitting the target. Join us for an archery shoot that will include an introduction to archery safety and shooting basics. All equipment will be provided. Please call the Park District at 419-683-9000 to register.

Nature Storytime

Monday, September 27 10am Lowe-Volk Park



Join Chelsea for an interactive read aloud and a fun story-related activity or animal visitor! It will be held outside in nice weather or inside the Nature Center if it is raining. Kids will receive a nature storytime ticket for attending and can choose a prize after five visits!

K9 "Nose" Best

Monday, September 27 6pm Lowe-Volk Park

The Ohio Division of Wildlife recently implemented a K9 program to assist the agency in its enforcement efforts. Wildlife Officer Nathan Kaufman (see his bio on page 2) will discuss what it takes to become a wildlife officer and a K9 handler. He will also have a demonstration of K9 May's abilities.

Infant Explorers: Crawdads/River

Wednesday, September 29 5pm Lowe-Volk Park

Your first instinct may be to keep your babies indoors. However, research tells us that infants in outdoor spaces benefit from access to a wide variety of sensory stimuli which they just can't experience indoors. Join Naturalist Abby and baby Vincenzo for a program about "crawdads" that will take place down by the river. Baby carriers may be useful for the hike to the river as the river trail is not stroller accessible. Dress for the weather and possibility of mosquitoes; we will be outside for at least part of the program.



PROGRAMS



October

Coleman Lanterns: Sunshine of the Night Saturday, October 2 7pm Lowe-Volk Park

Gas pressure appliances have been around for over 100 years, and Coleman continues to produce lanterns today. A Coleman lantern is synonymous with the outdoors, with millions of lanterns produced over the years. Join Josh and other Coleman collectors to learn about the history of Coleman lanterns, how lanterns work, and more importantly, how to fix them. After the presentation, stay for a glorious light up. Bring your old lantern and let's see if we can make it the Sunshine of the Night again!



Homeschool in Nature: Arachnids Thurs, October 7 9am, 11am & 2pm Lowe-Volk Park

Did you know all spiders spin silk, but not all use it to catch their prey? We will explore some of the amazing characteristics of not just spiders, but also of other arachnids. Dress for the weather because we'll also go on a hike to look for these unique animals. Please call the Park District at 419-683-9000 to reserve a spot for your 5-12-year-old.

Big Sit Saturday, October 9 Starts at 7am Lowe-Volk Park

Join Land Manager and Naturalist Kyle Bailey for the first annual Crawford Park District Big Sit. A "Big Sit" is a 24-hour non-competitive international birding event that aims at identifying as many birds as possible from within a 17-foot diameter circle. This event will be held at Lowe-Volk Nature Center beginning at dawn and running until dusk. Come enjoy donuts and cider and help us find some birds!

Praying Mantises Saturday, October 9 2pm Lowe-Volk Park

Join Naturalist Abby for a presentation learning all about praying mantises. After the presentation, you will get a chance to meet some of the praying mantises that live at the Nature Center as well as go on a hike to find some wild praying mantises living in our butterfly gardens.

Owl Prowl Saturday, October 9 7pm-9pm Lowe-Volk Park

Did you know that Ohio is home to eight species of owls with only four species being full-time residents? Come out to Lowe-Volk Park to learn about these amazing avian predators of the night. We will meet in Lowe-Volk Nature Center to discuss the natural history of owls before heading out onto the property to listen and look for owls.

Spectacular Spiders Sunday, October 10 12pm Lowe-Volk Park

Spiders are beneficial garden predators that help keep pest insect numbers down. Often misunderstood and under-appreciated, this program aims to dispel common myths about spiders, and to show the sheer diversity in size, shape, color, and overall appearance of these amazing creatures. Join Land Manager and Naturalist Kyle Bailey as we explore Lowe-Volk Park. Photography is welcome and encouraged!



Birding Basics Sat, Oct. 16 8am Sandusky Headwaters Preserve

Curious about birding, but don't know how to get involved? Join Naturalist Kyle Bailey for an interactive, family-friendly program suitable for all ages. Autumn is at its peak as bird migration is transitioning. This program will focus on birding basics such as learning how to identify common Ohio species, when and where to bird, how to bird, what to look for, and much more! Please bring binoculars or cameras to better view the birds. Binoculars are limited and will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Stewardship Program: Woody Species Saturday, October 16 11am-1pm Sandusky Headwaters Preserve

Do you enjoy getting your hands dirty while contributing to preserving our native habitats? Then come on out and assist Land Manager Kyle Bailey with removing unwanted woody species. We will begin with a brief introduction about stewardship and our target species before heading out into the field. Closed-toe shoes are required; long sleeves and pants are suggested. There is a possibility of contact with Poison Ivy. Dress for the weather. Some gloves and loppers will be available.



PROGRAMS



October

Halloween Family Fun Night

Saturday, October 16 6-9pm Lowe Volk Park

Come to Lowe-Volk Park and celebrate with a night filled with fall fun! Dress in your Halloween costume or just come to enjoy the activities. There will be a bonfire, face painting, nature art, wagon rides (weather permitting), and a treat bag for kids. The Crawford Park Astronomy Club will also be on hand to view celestial sights. Bring a flashlight to go on a guided night hike through the haunted woods or to go on a self-guided clue hike around the grass mounds. Fun for the whole family!

Canoeing

Monday, October 18 5-7pm Neff Reservoir

Stop out for an evening paddle around Neff Reservoir. After a lesson on canoeing basics and safety, we will send you out on the water! You will need to wear shoes that can get wet. No registration required, but it will be first come, first served.

Infant Explorers: Spiders

Wednesday, October 20 5pm Lowe-Volk Park

Your first instinct may be to keep your babies indoors. However, research tells us that infants in outdoor spaces benefit from access to a wide variety of sensory stimuli which they just can't experience indoors. Join Naturalist Abby and baby Vincenzo for a program about spiders that will engage your infant's senses and will get parents and baby out of the house for some fresh air! Dress for the weather—we will be outside for at least part of the program.



Sandusky Headwaters Preserve Grand Opening

Thursday, October 21 1pm

Sandusky Headwaters Preserve

After many hours of clean-up, trail clearing, wetland construction, and a host of other mini-projects, Sandusky Headwaters Preserve is ready for visitors! Join CPD board members and staff for a ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by a tour through the new preserve.

Autumn Nature Hike

Saturday, October 23 1pm Sears Woods

Join Naturalist Chelsea for a stroll through Sears Woods—it should be gorgeous with fall color this time of year! We will walk the moderate-intensity, one-mile loop overlooking the Sandusky River.

Feeding Day

Sunday, October 24 1pm Lowe-Volk Park

(See previous Feeding Day for more information.)

Nature Storytime

Monday, October 25 10am Lowe-Volk Park

(See previous Nature Storytime for more information.)

The Colors of Fall

Monday, October 25 5pm Lowe-Volk Park

Trees change from green to red, yellow, purple, or orange for many different reasons, including species and moisture. Join Josh to discover why tree leaves change color and why the leaves fall. Participants will then take a stroll to observe the many colors of fall leaves. After the hike, participants will get to tie-dye a CPD t-shirt. Pre-registration is required by October 22 and cost is \$10/shirt, payable at the start of the program.



Archery Pumpkin Shoot

Wednesday, October 27 4-7pm Unger Park

Finishing out our Archery programming this year, we will have our pumpkin shoot! Join Lisa and Abby for a fun evening of shooting pumpkins with arrows. We are going to test your archery skills with smaller targets. All equipment and pumpkins will be provided. Please call the Park District at 419-683-9000 to reserve a spot.

Saw-whet Owls

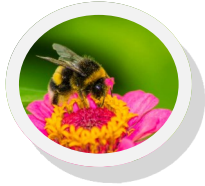
Friday, October 29 6:30pm Lowe-Volk Park

Secretive and nocturnal, Northern Saw-whets are Ohio's smallest owl. While there are a handful of nesting records in Ohio, Saw-whets breed mostly in northern boreal forests, with some venturing south in the fall and winter months. Bird bander Bob Placier will bring his mist nets back to Lowe-Volk to gather data on these diminutive owls. A PowerPoint presentation will be followed by checks of the mist nets in the hopes of catching a few of these nocturnal flyers. Between net checks, there will be a campfire to enjoy the fall evening. Dress for the weather and bring a flashlight. Fun for the whole family!

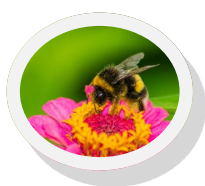


PLAY IN LEAVES!!!





PROGRAMS



October/November

Fall Bird Banding

Saturday, October 30 8am-12pm Lowe-Volk Park

Fall bird banding gives us insight into bird populations that remain in or come to Crawford County for the winter. Bob Placier will have his nets open and feeder traps set to see who is hanging around this time of year. Fun for all ages!

Homeschool in Nature: Finding Ferns

Thurs, Nov. 4 9am, 11am & 2pm Lowe-Volk Park

This month we're going to take a look at ferns that are growing in Lowe-Volk Park. We'll look at the different fronds to see how the species are similar or different. How many different species do you think we can find? Dress for the weather. Call the Park District at 419-683-9000 to reserve a spot for your 5-12-year-old.

Fall Hike

Sun, November 7 1pm Sandusky Headwaters Preserve

Come enjoy a relaxing stroll along the trails of your newest preserve! Join Josh as he points out key features and projects that make Sandusky Headwaters the newest gem of your park system. All ages welcome.

Bustling Bears

Wednesday, November 10 5pm Lowe-Volk Park



Kids, bring your adults to learn about bears that live in North America. While the Black Bears that live in Ohio might be slowing down and denning up soon, we will stay active with ways to learn all

about them and their behaviors. In addition to seeing some bear biofacts, you will also make a craft to take home.

Birding Basics

Saturday, November 13 8am Lowe-Volk Park

Curious about birding, but don't know how to get involved? Join Naturalist Kyle Bailey for an interactive, family-friendly program suitable for all ages. Autumn is winding down and so is migration. This program will focus on birding basics such as learning how to identify common Ohio species, when and where to bird, how to bird, what to look for, and much more! Please bring binoculars or cameras to better view the birds. Binoculars are limited and will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Stewardship Program: Woody Species

Saturday, November 13 11am-1pm

Sandusky Headwaters Preserve

Do you enjoy getting your hands dirty while contributing to preserving our native habitats? Then come on out and assist Land Manager Kyle Bailey with removing unwanted woody species. We will begin with a brief introduction about stewardship and our target species before heading out into the field. Closed-toe shoes are required; long sleeves and pants are suggested. There is a possibility of contact with Poison Ivy. Dress for the weather. Some gloves and loppers will be available.

Millipedes & Centipedes

Saturday, November 13 2pm Heckert NP

Join Naturalist Abby on a hike through Heckert Nature Preserve to find some of the "many-legged" creatures that live under logs and leaf litter in our forests. Dress for the weather as the event will happen rain or shine unless severe weather is present.



Owl Prowl

Saturday, November 13 7pm Lowe-Volk Park

(See previous Owl Prowl for more information)

Feeding Day

Sunday, November 14 1pm Lowe-Volk Park

(See previous Feeding Day for more information)

Infant Explorers: Pumpkins

Wednesday, November 17 5pm Lowe-Volk Park

Your first instinct may be to keep your babies indoors. However, research tells us that infants in outdoor spaces benefit from access to a wide variety of sensory stimuli which they just can't experience indoors. Join Naturalist Abby and baby Vincenzo for a program about pumpkins that will engage your infant's senses and get parents and baby out of the house for some fresh air! Dress for the weather; we will be outside for at least part of the program.

Nature Storytime

Monday, November 22 10am Lowe-Volk Park

(See previous Nature Storytime for more information)

Nature Camp 2021



All about trees...



...with camp favorites!

We love catching and meeting animals...



...and playing in water!



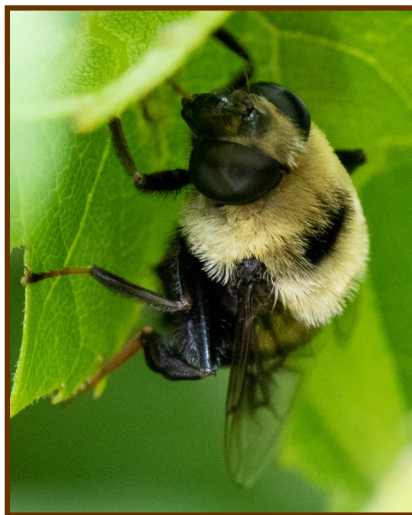
Unusual Flies Found in CPD Parks

By Chelsea Gottfried



Left to Right: Narrow-headed Marsh Fly, Carpenter's Bottom; Greater Ant Fly, Lowe-Volk Park; Golden-backed Snipe Fly, Sears Woods

Yes, you read the title right. In the insect world, appearances can be deceiving. Though these may look like pictures of bees and wasps, every single one is a fly! Flies can generally be distinguished from their six-legged brethren by their relatively larger eyes and shorter antennae. In addition, many species buzz loudly in flight. Flies are also more likely to exhibit perching behavior, whereas bees and wasps are usually busy nectaring at flowers or hunting. Exceptions abound however, as many flies gain energy from drinking nectar, and some are even predatory. Mimicking the appearance of a venomous creature may scare off potential predators and typically fool us into thinking these flies are dangerous too.



Left to Right: *Sparnopolius confusus* bee fly, Heckert Nature Preserve; Orange-legged Drone Fly, Daughmer Savannah; Wasp-like Falsehorn, Sears Woods

The rarest of the flies pictured are the Greater Ant Fly and the Wasp-like Falsehorn, both of which are flower flies in the family Syrphidae. This Greater Ant Fly was observed in early June hanging out above an ant mound in the successional area at Lowe-Volk Park. Ant flies are so named because their eggs are laid in ant nests where their larvae feast on ant eggs and larvae. To escape retaliation, they emit ant-like pheromones as a type of scent camouflage to hide from the ants. Such animals that live in association with ants are called *myrmecophilous*. As far as I know, this is the first and only record of this species in Ohio! (continued on next page)



Left to Right: Bumble Bee Mimic Robber Fly, Lowe-Volk Park; Common Eastern Physocephala, Lowe-Volk Park; Hairy-eyed Mimic Fly, Unger Park

Almost equally as rare in Ohio is the Wasp-like Falsehorn, an extraordinary yellow-jacket mimic whose larvae eat rotting wood. This one was spotted in late May in the successional area at the entrance to Sears Woods.

Don't let pesky house flies, deer flies, and horse flies convince you that flies are simply annoyances to be detested. Flies are essential pollinators and decomposers and are also food for many animals. What's more, the world of flies is beautifully and interestingly diverse. Next time you are outside, take a closer look at the insects around you—you might be surprised by what you find!

Sandusky Headwaters Preserve Grand Opening

After over three years of planning and implementing, Sandusky Headwaters Preserve will be open to the public starting **October 21, 2021!** The CPD staff and Board will hold a ribbon cutting for this grand opening on Thursday, October 21 at 1pm. Following the ribbon cutting, participants will get a tour of the newest preserve for the citizens of Crawford County.



Junior Naturalist Club

The Crawford Park District's Junior Naturalist Club has monthly meetings for 12-18-year-olds who are interested in nature. Meeting topics change each month and will vary based on interests of the members. The goal of the club is "To foster and encourage excitement for nature and nature related careers within a community of young adults, giving them tools they need to excel in the pursuit of their interests." Along with meetings, other opportunities to assist with CPD events and programming are available. For more information about the CPD's Junior Naturalist Club, or if you know a 12-18-year-old who would like to join, contact Naturalist Abby Ditomassi by calling the park office at 419-683-9000; or you can send her an email: aditomassi@crawfordpd.org.

Meeting Dates: September 11, 8pm-10pm

October 9, 5-7pm

November 13, 5-7pm

Meetings are held at the Lowe-Volk Nature Center.

CPD Book Club

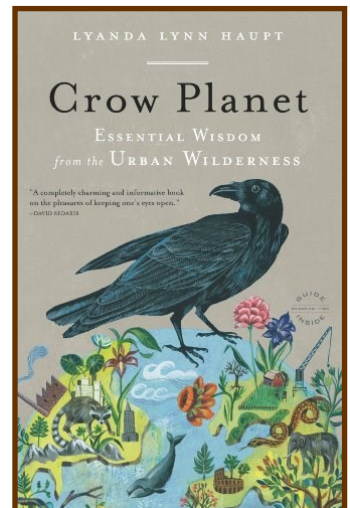
Do you love nature and also love to read? With the abundance of books available for nature lovers, sometimes it's hard to choose the next great book to read. Join the Crawford Park District's Book Club, and we will figure it out together! So come armed with your favorite book about nature or a nature-centered book you want to read, and be ready to make your case to the club!

Book Club Meeting Dates:

Sept. 27 @ 7pm

Oct. 25 & Nov. 29 @ 6pm

Meetings take place at the Lowe-Volk Nature Center.



Crawford Park Astronomy Club

The Astronomy Club will meet on the 4th and 5th Saturday of every month 30 minutes after sunset. Please dress for the weather. On rainy or cloudy nights, the meeting will be held in the Nature Center.

Pegasus



The 7th largest constellation in the night sky, spanning an area of 1121 square degrees, is Pegasus. The constellation was named for the white winged horse in Greek mythology that sprang from the neck of Medusa when Perseus beheaded her. There are 15 formally named stars that form the constellation. The easiest and brightest ones to see are the four stars that form the Great Square of Pegasus (an asterism like the Big Dipper). They represent the main body of Pegasus. The rest of the stars represent the front legs and head. The constellation is also known for deep sky objects such as Messier 15, Stephan's Quintet of galaxies, and the Einstein Cross. If you want to find Pegasus, look in the fourth quadrant at latitudes between +90° and -60°.

Other notes from the Astronomy Club:

- * The Hidden Hollow Astronomy Conference will be from October 7th-10th. Many astronomers gather for lectures and solar and night sky viewing; there will also be food trucks and raffle prizes. This event has a fee and requires registration. Visit wro.org for more details.
- * Our annual star program at Headwaters Park in Mt. Gilead, OH is on October 16 at 7pm. It's a very fun, free event that is open to the public. Hope to see you there!
- * We will also have the telescopes out at Halloween Family Fun Night on October 16 from 6-9pm at Lowe-Volk Park.
- * As always, you may bring your own telescopes. If you need assistance, we will help you set them up and teach you how to use them.
- * Dress for the weather! The nights are cooling off, and hopefully the bugs will be reduced.

Meeting Dates

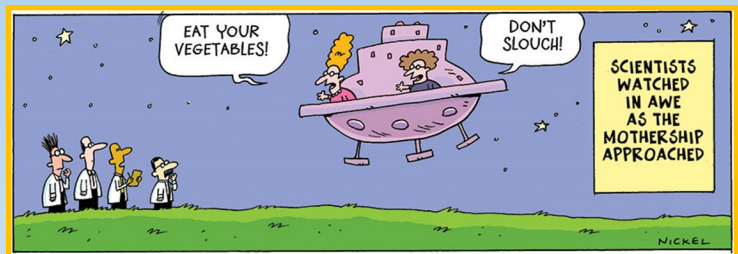


September 25	7:30 pm
October 25	7:00 pm
October 30	7:00 pm
November 20	5:30 pm



Targets for Fall

- ✦ **Jupiter** – The largest planet in our solar system is ½ billion miles away, has 4 Galilean moons, and over 60 other moons
- ✦ **Saturn** – 1 billion miles away, known for its beautiful rings, and has several moons
- ✦ **Globular Clusters** – There are about 150 known in the Milky Way and each is formed from thousands of stars
- ✦ **Earth's Moon** – The 5th largest moon in our solar system, 240,000 miles from earth, and is a real treat to see through a telescope
- ✦ **Andromeda Galaxy** – The closest large spiral galaxy, a real nice view of 1 trillion stars, and one of the brightest objects in the night sky
- ✦ **Horsehead Nebula** – Look near Orion's Belt to see Barnard 33, a dark cloud of cold gas and dust, visible because it's positioned in front of the Flame Nebula
- ✦ **M42** – Orion Nebula is 1,500 light years away, known for being a stellar nursery, and can be seen just below Orion's Belt
- ✦ **M45** – Sometimes referred to as Seven Sisters or Pleiades star cluster, is visible from all parts of the world, and is 410 light years away
- ✦ **M81** – Also known as Bode's Galaxy, a spiral galaxy 11,000,000 light years away, and contains more than 200 globular clusters
- ✦ **North Star** – A double star also known as Polaris
- ✦ **M101** – More commonly called the Pinwheel Galaxy, found in Ursa Major, has 1 trillion stars, and contains more than 200 globular clusters



Sandusky River Clean Sweep

Volunteer and make a difference in your community!

Volunteers Needed!!

Volunteer to help remove trash from the Sandusky River.

Volunteers must register prior to the event. Please dress to be in the stream with closed-toe footwear, sunscreen, and bug spray suggested. Trash bags, gloves, water, and a light snack bag will be provided.

Saturday September 25th, 2021

9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Multiple Locations to Participate:

Tiffin - Junior Home Park

Fremont –Rodger Young Park

Crawford County –Lowe-Volk Park



Registration Information:

Registration opens August 1, 2021. Go to sanduskyriver.org and follow the registration link on our home page. Register before Sept 12 to receive a free Clean Sweep t-shirt!

Contact Jakob Boehler with questions. 419-448-2054

Visit us at:

www.sanduskyriver.org

Event Partners & Sponsors



Thank you to the following who have donated to the Friends of the Crawford Park District:

May 11, 2021 through August 11, 2021



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& Dr. Laurie Rhodebeck
Carol Rhodebeck — In Memory of
Jim & Laurie Rhodebeck

An Uncommon Common Milkweed Text: Josh Dyer Photos: Chelsea Gottfried



Driving to and from work each day, I love watching Salem Prairie change from the dormant state of winter to the beautiful mosaic of color displayed throughout summer and early autumn. Being somewhat of a remnant on the eastern edge of the Sandusky Plains, I'm always on the lookout for other plant relicts. Last year I noticed a large amount of Common Milkweed near Salem Prairie. Ever on the lookout for Monarch butterflies, I continually monitor the progression of the milkweed patches along my daily travels.

One morning, something different caught my eye in one of those milkweed patches: instead of the typical light-purple flower heads, I noticed a whitish-green colored flower. Of course, my nature-nerd curiosity kicked in. "I'm gonna stop by and check out that patch on my way home," I thought to myself. To my surprise, the patch of milkweed was the white form of Common Milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca* forma *leucantha*. In Ohio, this form was previously known to grow only in more southern counties. Other botanists commented that they had only seen it less than a handful of times.

In the botanical world white flower forms of plants are called "albiflora"; they are not true albinos since they still produce chlorophyll, the pigment which makes leaves green. Due to a genetically recessive trait, the "albiflora" form of Common Milkweed lacks the pigment anthocyanin, which normally creates the pinkish hue of its flowers. Though a natural variation in pigment intensity is found in Common Milkweed flowers—ranging from pale pink to darker mauve—the white-flowered form is quite uncommon and is worth seeking out.

Be on the lookout for and let us know if you come across any other populations of "albiflora" milkweed in Crawford County! Milkweeds provide nectar to hummingbirds and to hundreds of insect species. They also host ten species of specialist insects, most famously the Monarch. Please help protect them from mowing or spraying when possible. Lastly, many thanks are owed to Travis Koschnick and the Crawford County Highway Department who agreed to not mow the patch so that seeds can be collected.



Friends of the Crawford Park District
 2401 State Route 598
 Crestline, Ohio 44827
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Trails Newsletter

Crawford Park District Abbreviated Calendar

Park/Program Location Key:

LVP (Lowe-Volk Park); **UP** (Unger Park); **HNP** (Heckert Nature Preserve);
SHP (Sandusky Headwaters Preserve; **CB** (Carpenter's Bottom); **SW** (Sears Woods);
BCLL (Buckeye Central Outdoor Learning Lab); **NEFF** (Neff Reservoir)



Date	Program/Event	Time	Park	Sat. Oct. 16	Birding Basics	8am	SHP
Thurs. Sept. 2	Homeschool in Nature	9am, 11am, 2pm	LVP	Sat. Oct. 16	Stewardship	11am-1pm	SHP
Wed. Sept. 8	Monarch Tagging	5pm	BCLL	Sat. Oct. 16	Halloween Family Fun Night	6pm-9pm	LVP
Sat. Sept. 11	Catchin' Crawdads	4pm	LVP	Mon. Oct. 18	Canoeing	5pm-7pm	Neff
Sat. Sept. 11	Caterpillar Hunt	8pm-11pm	LVP	Wed. Oct. 20	Infant Explorers:	5pm	LVP
Wed. Sept. 15	Monarch Tagging	6pm	UP	Thurs. Oct. 21	SHP Grand Opening	1pm	SHP
Fri. Sept. 17	Fall Migration Bird Banding	8am-12pm	LVP	Sat. Oct. 23	Autumn Nature Hike	1pm	SW
Sat. Sept. 18	Birding Basics	8am	HNP	Sat. Oct. 23	Viewing the Night Sky	7pm	LVP
Sat. Sept. 18	Fungus Among Us	11am	LVP	Sun. Oct. 24	Feeding Day	1pm	LVP
Sun. Sept. 19	Seed Collection	12pm-2pm	UP	Mon. Oct. 25	Nature Storytime	10am	LVP
Tues. Sept. 21	Monarch Tagging	5pm	LVP	Mon. Oct. 25	The Colors of Fall	5pm	LVP
Thurs. Sept. 23	Canoeing	5pm-7pm	Neff	Mon. Oct. 25	Book Club	6pm	LVP
Sat. Sept. 25	Sandusky River Clean Sweep	9am-12pm	LVP	Wed. Oct. 27	Archery Pumpkin Shoot	4pm-7pm	UP
Sat. Sept. 25	Pickin' Pawpaws	1pm	CB	Fri. Oct. 29	Saw-whet Owls	6:30pm	LVP
Sat. Sept. 25	Viewing the Night Sky	7:30pm	LVP	Sat. Oct. 30	Fall Bird Banding	8am-12pm	LVP
Sat. Sept. 25	Caterpillar Hunt	8pm-11pm	LVP	Sat. Oct. 30	Viewing the Night Sky	7pm	LVP
Sun. Sept. 26	Feeding Day	1pm	LVP	Thurs. Nov. 4	Homeschool in Nature	9am, 11am, 2pm	LVP
Sun. Sept. 26	Archery	3pm-5pm	LVP	Sun. Nov. 7	Fall Hike	1pm	SHP
Mon. Sept. 27	Nature Storytime	10am	LVP	Wed. Nov 10	Bustling Bears	5pm	LVP
Mon. Sept. 27	K9 "Nose" Best	6pm	LVP	Sat. Nov. 13	Birding Basics	8am	LVP
Mon. Sept. 27	Book Club	7pm	LVP	Sat. Nov. 13	Stewardship Program	11am-1pm	SHP
Wed. Sept. 29	Infant Explorers	5pm	LVP	Sat. Nov. 13	Millipedes & Centipedes	2pm	HNP
Sat. Oct. 2	Coleman Lanterns	7pm	LVP	Sat. Nov. 13	Owl Prowl	7pm	LVP
Thurs. Oct. 7	Homeschool in Nature	9am, 11am, 2pm	LVP	Sun. Nov. 14	Feeding Day	1pm	LVP
Sat. Oct. 9	First Annual "Big Sit"	7am-dusk	LVP	Wed. Nov. 17	Infant Explorers: Pumpkins	5pm	LVP
Sat. Oct. 9	Praying Mantises	2pm	LVP	Sat. Nov. 20	Viewing the Night Sky	5:30pm	LVP
Sat. Oct. 9	Owl Prowl	7pm-9pm	LVP	Mon. Nov. 22	Nature Storytime	10am	LVP
Sun. Oct. 10	Spectacular Spiders	12pm	LVP	Mon. Nov. 29	Book Club	6pm	LVP