

Vol. 56 No. 2

SPRING 2015

GREEN ISLANDS

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FROM SUMMIT METRO PARKS

ON THE INSIDE

- 4 Bobwhite Quail
on the come-back trail
- 8 Creating Habitats for Fish
adding man-made structures
- 10 Scat Chat
the scoop on poop!

Summit
Metro Parks



Your Metro Parks are funded by a small Summit County real-estate tax.
This magazine is an example of your public dollars at work.

Our parks are like green islands
in an urban landscape.

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Bobwhite Quail | 4 |
| In Your Back Yard | 7 |
| Creating Fish Habitats | 8 |
| Scat Chat | 10 |
| Spree For All hiking form..... | 12 |

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Jane Bond *Chair*
Herb Newman
Morgan C. Greene, Ph.D.
Joel D. Bailey
Mark A. Spisak
Keith D. Shy *Director-Secretary*

EDITORS

Nathan Eppink *Chief of Marketing & Communications*
Lindsay Smith *Marketing Coordinator*

ART DIRECTOR

Karl Simonson *Graphic Design Coordinator*

Summit Metro Parks
975 Treaty Line Rd.
Akron, OH 44313-5837
330-867-5511

F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm: 330-865-8065
Seasonal Information: 330-865-8060
Volunteer Information: 330-865-8047

Photos contributed by:

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Rob Blair | Doug Dawes | Ramsey Langford |
| Loretta Bowers | Kathy Dennis | Marlo Perdicas |
| Jerry Cannon | Don Heffner | J.J. Prekop Jr. |

This magazine is mailed free of charge to Summit County residents. To join the mailing list, send your name and mailing address to marketing@summitmetroparks.org or call 330-867-5511.

Green Islands can be downloaded online:
summitmetroparks.org



Printed on FSC-certified Chorus Art Silk;
a 30% post-consumer, processed chlorine-free
recycled paper.

BOARD of PARK commissioners



The park district's governing body is appointed by the Summit County Probate Judge. Commissioners serve overlapping three-year terms and are assisted by the director-secretary, who oversees the work of full-time and part-time employees, seasonal workers and volunteers. For more information, please call the administrative offices at 330-867-5511.

ABOUT the cover

The bobwhite quail is a small, chicken-like game bird that is native to Ohio. Summit Metro Parks reintroduced the species here in 2014.



PARK news

- The district's newest park, **Wood Hollow Metro Park** (2121 Barlow Rd., Hudson), will open in May. It includes the 1.2-mile Downy Loop Trail, restrooms and an information kiosk, and it brings to 15 the number of parks managed by Summit Metro Parks.
- The new **Liberty Park Nature Center** will also open in May. The 3,000-square-foot facility (9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg) is the district's second public building for exhibits, displays and programs. Two new paths — the Bluebird and Maple Loop trails — will be added to the site, and with the existing 1.1-mile Ledges Trail, visitors will soon have about 2.5 miles of trails to explore in the Twinsburg Ledges Area.
- **F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm** has been named a "monarch waystation" by the Monarch Watch Organization. A monarch



PARK news (continued)

waystation is a healthy monarch habitat of at least 100 square feet that meets special criteria. Learn more at monarchwatch.org.



- **Spree For All**, the two-month hiking series on flat, easy trails, begins May 1. Earn rewards by completing five hikes before June 30. A first-year hiker earns a neck lanyard and commemorative pin. A veteran hiker earns the commemorative pin.

For more news, visit our website:

summitmetroparks.org

SWIM SEASON BEGINS

Enjoy lake swimming **May 23 through August 16.**

During swim season, an admission fee or season pass is required to enter our swim areas, open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Munroe Falls Metro Park
Lake Area

521 S. River Rd.
Munroe Falls 44262

Silver Creek Metro Park
Bathhouse

5000 Hametown Rd.
Norton 44203

Daily admission is \$4 for adults and teens (ages 13 and older), \$3 for children (ages 2 to 12). Kids under 2 are admitted free. Age at time of purchase determines price.

For more information, visit summitmetroparks.org or call **330-867-5511** Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

FRIENDS OF METRO PARKS

Friends of Metro Parks is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that supports the park district in many ways, including educating visitors about important issues and connecting residents of Summit County with the rich resources of our Metro Parks. Membership dues allow Friends to support the mission and programs of the park district.

For information about joining Friends:

friendsofmetroparks.org



4th annual Mother's Day 5K



Sunday, May 10

**Munroe Falls Metro Park
Lake Area**
521 S. River Rd., Munroe Falls

Run, jog or walk
in **celebration** of
MOM
during this family event!

The paved course travels twice around the scenic lake. Jogging strollers are welcome. Advance registration is \$20/person. Participants 14 and under are free, but they must register.

A fundraiser to support the
**Summit Metro Parks
Foundation**

summitmetroparks.org
330-865-8065




BRINGING THE



The bobwhite quail is a small, chicken-like game bird that is native to Ohio and most of the eastern United States. Its name is derived from the male's distinctive call: "bob-WHITE!" Scarcely heard today, this call was once a familiar sound to Summit County residents just a few decades ago.

Bobwhite quail stand about six inches tall and weigh about 6 ounces — the weight of a quarter. Their feathers are hues of brown, white and black. Males have alternating black and white stripes on their faces. Females blend better into their surroundings with alternating black and caramel colored stripes.



BACK BOBWHITE QUAIL

Marlo Perdicas, Biologist



Release of bobwhite hatchlings

Bobwhites require grassland areas with seeds and insects. They also need thick, shrubby areas nearby to provide cover from harsh weather and predators.

Since our landscape has changed dramatically over the last 100 years, bobwhite quail numbers have continued to decline. Ohio once had more farmland with diverse crops and adjacent hedgerows that provided the perfect balance of habitats needed for the birds to survive. Present farming practices have removed hedgerows

between fields and now monocultures of corn, soybeans and grain provide little food diversity or protective cover for quail. Once common practices such as prescribed fire also created quail habitat.

Released in Summit County

Summit Metro Parks heralded the return of the bobwhite quail to Summit County with a reintroduction project that began in March 2014. Forty adult birds were introduced in two Metro Parks: Springfield Bog in Springfield Township and Silver Creek in Norton. These areas were chosen because they harbor an



The male's distinctive call, "bob-WHITE," may be heard as they perch in a tree.

adequate mix of grasslands and early growth shrub-thickets.

The birds were released with anticipation. They would need to quickly adapt to their new surroundings; finding food and protection from predators was crucial to their survival. The days following the release were painfully quiet. Wildlife cameras and reconnaissance surveys turned up nothing.

Too many predators, inadequate habitat and lack of natural instincts may have been to blame. Disappointment followed.

continued on page 6



continued from page 5

The Silence is Broken

"Bob-WHITE. Bob-WHITE."

Reports started filtering in through social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, and online birding resources. People shared things like, "I haven't heard a bobwhite for more than 30 years!" and "You have to visit Springfield Bog Metro Park and see the bobwhite quail!"


Birds continued to be heard and seen throughout the prairie at Springfield Bog over the summer and fall. However, winter can be harsh. Birds gather in groups after the breeding season has ended to form coveys, which consist of 12 or more males and females. Coveys provide warmth when roosting, efficient feeding and better predator detection. Despite the help from one another, winter survival of quail is generally low. It takes many birds to sustain a bobwhite quail population.

The Project Expands

Metro Parks purchased day-old bobwhite quail chicks to raise and release. Young

birds were released at Silver Creek Metro Park in early June and then again in late July 2014. These birds were raised in a box called a surrogator. The predator-proof box provided everything the young quail required: food, water, shelter and heat for the first five weeks of their lives. The surrogator also provided one critical piece that the birds didn't need: interaction with people. The surrogator was designed to function independently and required little assistance from humans to raise the birds. This approach helped the birds stay wild and improved their chances of survival once they were released.

While nearly 200 birds have been raised and released at Silver Creek Metro Park, the birds have been difficult to relocate and monitor. Have they survived? Biologists are unsure of the answer. Time will tell.

The reintroduction project will continue at both parks in 2015, and Summit Metro Parks biologists hope bobwhite quail will become a fixture in Summit County once again. 



Fast facts

- Female bobwhite quail lay nine to 18 eggs in a nest on the ground.
- American Indians ate bobwhite quail. They often burned grasslands to improve habitat for the species.
- The extremely harsh Ohio winter of 1977 reduced quail numbers in the state by an estimated 90 percent.

IN YOUR BACK YARD

Ohio Buckeye Tree (*Aesculus glabra*)



Illustration by
Danette Rushboldt, Naturalist

The Ohio buckeye became our state tree in 1953. It is a tree that has interesting parts all around.

Its leaves are shaped like the palm of your hand, with five leaflets arranged on each stem. The flowers that bloom in late spring are some of the most gorgeous of all deciduous trees, opening in spikes of yellowish-green. The spiked fruits can be handled carefully to expose the seed in the center. It is said that American Indians gave the tree its namesake because the seeds resemble the eyes of the animal they often hunted in the forest: the male white-tailed deer, or buck.

Although the tree doesn't hold special value for lumber, it is still of great importance for aesthetics and landscaping. Since it is a native tree, wildlife depends on buckeyes and their relatives for food, habitat and reproduction. For example, you can always count on the return of ruby-throated hummingbirds soon after the buckeye blooms. They view the nectar as a delicacy after a long flight. 🌿

— Meghan Doran, Naturalist



Learn more on the Summit Metro Parks blog!
[Medium.com/@metro_parks](https://medium.com/@metro_parks)

CREATING FISH

Lindsay Smith, Marketing Coordinator



Most of the fishing ponds and lakes in the Metro Parks were created by impounding small streams or digging down to groundwater, and most lacked natural habitat when they were made. Research tells us that adding man-made structures to newer bodies of water can help maintain healthy fish populations.



What are fish habitat structures made of?

Hollowed logs or trees, such as oak, hickory and cedar work best as underwater shelters due to their resistance to decay. Man-made materials such as flexible PVC pipe, concrete blocks and wooden pallets can all be fashioned into great fish structures as well.



Recently, Park Biologist Ramsey Langford worked with our Planning Department to install habitat structures in the new fishing pond at Wood Hollow Metro Park in Hudson, opening in spring 2015.

“Using different literature — some produced by the Ohio Division of Wildlife and other online resources — we were able to create artificial structures that would serve as a suitable replacement of natural plant vegetation,” said Langford. “Our fish structures are made from cinder blocks and large logs.”

Why do we need them?

Underwater creatures use natural and man-made structures for several different purposes. Most game fish, like largemouth bass, catfish, and bluegill, are attracted to shelters of all types because of the possibility of finding prey that is trying to hide. These same structures can harbor invertebrates and provide spawning areas for fish reproduction.

“A healthy fish population in our ponds and lakes means a better fishing experience for park visitors. We


HABITAT

placed structures in strategic locations to bolster the number of fish and ensure that the water can stay naturally stocked,” Langford explained.

Are the structures successful?

Anglers are making the connection that lakes and streams with the best fishing have the healthiest fish habitat, which is often man-made habitat. Langford said

many have discovered that more fish can be caught near areas where there are fish structures in the water.

Langford adds: “For many years, our park managers have taken an active role in developing fish habitat in our ponds and lakes. Periodically, staff has even used recycled Christmas trees, donated by park visitors, to form artificial reefs.” 

Where are fish structures located in the Metro Parks?

- **Wood Hollow** – Opening this season; Hudson
- **Silver Creek** – Silver Creek Lake, in designated areas; Norton
- **Furnace Run** – Brushwood Lake; Richfield
- **Firestone** – Little Turtle Pond (ages 15 and under); Akron

A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE



Over 20 years ago, Director-

Secretary Keith Shy implemented

the largest fish habitat enhance-

ment project in the park district's

history during the creation of

Silver Creek Lake. Prior to the

construction of the dam, Shy

(then superintendent of opera-

tions) left select trees standing

in place and felled others, and

substrate including rock and

gravel was brought in to create

spawning areas.

COYOTES

Elizabeth Kresse, Naturalist



SCAT

Everyone poops! Poop is an important tool used to find out what animals eat. Animal scat can tell us how wildlife diets change throughout the year.

As omnivores (eating both plants and animals), coyotes eat differently depending on what is available. Although some features of coyote scat change due to seasonal diet, it is generally cord shaped with a pinched

end and tends to be darker in color due to the animal protein in their diet.

During the winter and spring, deer make up about 60% of a coyote's diet. As a result, it is common to see large amounts of deer fur in their scat. In the colder seasons, vegetation is uncommon and only accounts for about 5% of their diet.

Summer and fall also signal a change in diet that

can be seen in coyote scat. They consume fewer deer and more mice, voles and cottontail rabbits. The amount of vegetation they eat increases during the summer months, making up more than 40% of their diet.

So the next time you go for a hike, take some time to stop and “smell” the scat! 🐾



Coyote scat with animal fur and bone fragments

Q: Do coyotes hunt in packs and kill healthy deer?

A: Coyotes do not hunt in packs and only eat deer that have been hit by cars or are unhealthy.

PARK PUZZLER



NEW PARK AREAS & TRAILS

Find the words in the word search puzzle.
Some words appear backward.

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| BLUEBIRD | MAPLE LOOP |
| DOWNY LOOP | NATURE CENTER |
| EAGLE POINT | POND RUN |
| LAKEVIEW LOOP | SEVEN PONDS |
| LIBERTY PARK | SOUTH POINT |
| LONESOME POND | WOOD HOLLOW |

Find the solution at summitmetroparks.org.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| L | S | S | O | W | L | H | N | D | L | F | K |
| P | O | D | V | Y | W | V | A | O | A | V | R |
| O | U | N | P | D | O | B | T | W | K | E | A |
| O | T | O | E | Y | L | Z | U | N | E | A | P |
| L | H | P | P | S | L | U | R | Y | V | G | Y |
| E | P | N | O | V | O | Y | E | L | I | L | T |
| L | O | E | N | P | H | M | C | O | E | E | R |
| P | I | V | D | M | D | I | E | O | W | P | E |
| A | N | E | R | W | O | R | N | P | L | O | B |
| M | T | S | U | W | O | U | T | Y | O | I | I |
| H | X | H | N | V | W | V | E | R | O | N | L |
| R | B | L | U | E | B | I | R | D | P | T | D |

SPREE FOR ALL

2015 Spring Hiking Event

TO PARTICIPATE

Complete **FIVE** hikes between **May 1** and **June 30** — on five different trails, the same trail or any combination of trails — to receive a reward. Starting point at each trailhead is the information kiosk, which has a legend with the following symbols:

- Blue Circle = 1/4 mile round trip
- Yellow Square = 1/2 mile round trip
- ▲ Green Triangle = 1 mile round trip

Mileage markers are provided as an aid. **You do not need to hike any prescribed length to receive credit.**

First-year hikers earn a neck lanyard and commemorative pin. Veteran hikers earn the commemorative pin. Hikes are **FREE** for all participants. Out-of-county residents pay to receive their rewards (\$10 for first-year hikers, \$5 for veteran hikers).

WHERE TO GET YOUR REWARD

The administrative offices (975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron), 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm (1828 Smith Rd., Akron), noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday.

Rewards are not mailed. Forms cannot be redeemed after August 15, 2015.

MULTIPURPOSE TRAILS

BIKE & HIKE TRAIL

Barlow Road
331 Barlow Rd.
Hudson 44236

FREEDOM TRAIL

Middlebury
1765 Northeast Ave.
Tallmadge 44278

PARKS

CASCADE VALLEY

Overlook Trail
354 Sackett Ave.
Akron 44313

F.A. SEIBERLING NATURE REALM

1828 Smith Rd.
Akron 44313

FURNACE RUN

Brushwood Area
4955 Townsend Rd.
Richfield 44286

OHIO & ERIE CANAL TOWPATH TRAIL

Big Bend
1337 Merriman Rd.
Akron 44313

Memorial Parkway
499 Memorial Pkwy.
Akron 44310

Franklin
2328 Center Rd.
New Franklin 44216



GOODYEAR HEIGHTS

Pioneer Area
550 Frazier Ave.
Akron 44305

GORGE

Main Entrance
1160 Front St.
Cuyahoga Falls 44221

LIBERTY

Twinsburg Ledges Area
9999 Liberty Rd.
Twinsburg 44087

MUNROE FALLS

Tallmadge Meadows Area
1088 North Ave.
Tallmadge 44278

SAND RUN

Old Portage Area
1300 Sand Run Pkwy.
Akron 44313

 Please share this publication and recycle it when finished.

12th ANNUAL SPREE FOR ALL

SPRING HIKING EVENT

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY/GROUP HIKING FORM

PRIMARY PARTICIPANT

FIRST-YEAR Hiker ☐ VETERAN ☐ SUMMIT CO. RESIDENT ☐ Yes ☐ No

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------|-----------|
| Primary Participant's Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Age |
| Address | | City | State Zip |
| Email | | Phone | |

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS

FIRST-YEAR Hiker ☐ VETERAN ☐ SUMMIT CO. RESIDENT ☐ Yes ☐ No

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|------|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

MULTIPURPOSE TRAIL

Bike & Hike Trail
Freedom Trail
Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail
Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail
Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail
Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail

TRAILHEAD

Barlow Road
Middlebury
Big Bend
Memorial Parkway
Franklin
Clinton

DATES (Volunteers or staff may be available to date your form.)

METRO PARK

Cascade Valley
F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm (no pets)
Furnace Run (1/8 mile round trip, only)
Goodyear Heights (1/2 mile round trip, only)
Gorge (1/2 mile round trip, only) Grade is approximately five percent.
Liberty
Munroe Falls (1/2 mile round trip, only)
Sand Run

LOCATION

Overlook Trail
Rock & Herb Garden
Brushwood Area
Alder Trail
Gorge Trail
Maple Trail
Meadow Loop
Jogging Trail

Please note: Before starting any fitness program, it is the participant's responsibility to contact their physician with respect to any past or present illness or injury that may affect their ability to participate in the program.