

GREEN ISLANDS

Vol. 60 No. 2 /MAR-APR '19

Summit Metro Parks Bi-Monthly Magazine

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BEE Great: Pollinate!

Our parks are like green islands in an urban landscape.

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Summit Metro Parks Foundation

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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 executive director, who oversees the work of full-time and part-time employees, seasonal workers and volunteers.

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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

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SWIM SEASON BEGINS

Enjoy lake swimming May 25 through August 11. During swim season, an admission fee or season pass is required to enter our swim areas, open weekdays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and weekends/holidays 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Swim areas may be closed due to weather conditions.

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:

\$5 for adults, teens and children (5 and older)

FREE for children under 5

Age at time of purchase determines price. Payment is by cash or check only.

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

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DISCOVER YOUR BACK YARD Section

Unconventional Native Plants for Pollinators

by Joe Malmisur, Interpretive Naturalist

Fortunately, more people are learning about the importance of native plants and their impact on our ecosystem. By choosing these plants, you will have color, nectar, pollen and host plants that will attract butterflies, bees, birds and insects throughout the year. Here are five uncommon native plants to consider planting as an alternative to common varieties like milkweed, beebalm, echinacea, asters and goldenrods.

FULL SUN

Culver's Root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*)

Bloom Time: Summer

Soil: Average to Wet

New York Ironweed (*Vernonia harperi*)

Bloom Time: Summer to Fall

Soil: Average to Wet

Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*)

Bloom Time: Summer

Soil: Average to Dry

SUN TO PART SHADE

Joe-Pye Weed (*Eutrochium* spp.)

Bloom Time: Summer

Soil: Average to Wet

Lupine (*Lupine* spp.)

Bloom Time: Spring to Summer

Soil: Average to Dry

For more information, consider attending SMP's Native Plant series in the coming months. Check the Programs

& Events section of this publication or summitmetroparks.org for details.

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PROTECTING ENDANGERED SPECIES

Summit Metro Parks are places where we take refuge from the stress of daily life. But parks offer refuge to more than our human citizens. Each Metro Park is home to an astonishing array of rare, threatened and endangered species of plants and animals. In fact, our parks host 264 of the rarest, and most endangered, species on Earth.

For nearly 100 years, park district staff have worked tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to protect our natural areas and the rare species living within.

Why Protect Endangered Species?

Every living species on earth is a chemical factory that is the result of millions of years of experimentation and biological perfection. Most of our medicines are derived from chemicals and compounds that were first produced by plants and animals. We do not invent new medicines and products as much as we mimic what nature has already accomplished. Thus, it is in our self-interest to preserve all living species on earth.

But there is another side to the conservation of species. The conservation of biodiversity is similar to the preservation of art. Every species is a masterpiece. As a society, we collect and curate and spend millions of dollars to preserve species because we have decided they have an intrinsic value that transcends monetary value. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) is unambiguous in this regard: the American people value every species on earth and extinction within our borders is unacceptable.

What Does it Mean to be Listed as Rare?

But who gets to decide what is rare or endangered and what is being done to protect these creatures? At the global level, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN Red List) is considered the most comprehensive inventory of global conservation status. Within Summit Metro Parks, there are 14 globally ranked Red List species, including tubercled rein-orchids, Great Plains Ladies'-tresses and ginseng. With a little patience, park patrons can observe Red-Listed cerulean warblers at Deep Lock Quarry

Metro Park and Henslow's sparrows at Silver Creek Metro Park — these species are considered stable for now.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 is the platform for national-scale species conservation within the United States. Overseen by the Fish and Wildlife Service, federally listed plants and animals have the strongest legal protections, and Summit Metro Parks is home to nine of these species. The federally endangered Indiana bat has been seen at Liberty Park and Clinton Conservation Area. Our most imperiled species is the federally threatened northern monkshood, which clings to existence on a single rock ledge along the banks of the Cuyahoga River.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources also maintains a list of species that are rare and endangered in Ohio. Some of these species may be very common outside of the state, but their representation here is poor. Most of the rare species in the Metro Parks are actually plants that you may walk right by and never know it.

Finally, Summit Metro Parks maintains a list of species considered noteworthy to Summit County. For example, while 99 percent of the magnificent American chestnut were eliminated by a blight nearly 100 years ago, there are a few immune specimens hanging on at Gorge, Sand Run and Munroe Falls Metro Parks. The West Virginia white is a small, rapidly declining butterfly being impacted by the invasive (and toxic) garlic mustard that's replacing the native plant used by the caterpillar of this species. Another interesting species is the five-lined skink, the only lizard native to Northeast Ohio.

How Do We Conserve our Protected Species?

Summit Metro Parks staff employ a host of tools to help manage and protect our rare and endangered species. We are utilizing genetic cloning to save our northern monkshood. Prescribed fire and herbicides are used to battle the invasive plants displacing our native ecosystems. But the most effective thing we can do to protect our rare and endangered plants and wildlife is to leave them alone. We work closely with park planners, naturalists and operations staff to plan trails and recreational areas around our sensitive habitats and species. And, we depend on your help in these important efforts. You can do your part by staying on designated trails and taking nothing with you when you leave our parks. By working together, we can all protect these amazing species for generations to come.

Call out:
At 415, Liberty Park in Twinsburg has the greatest number of listed species.

Call out:
Deep Lock Quarry in Peninsula has the greatest density of listed species. The old sandstone quarry mimics a sandstone cliff community, one of the rarest natural habitats in Ohio.

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SMP Employee Spotlight:

Demetrius Lambert-Falconer, Chief of Community Engagement

How long have you worked at SMP?

DF: I have worked for Summit Metro Parks since May of 2016. Previously, I worked for a neighboring park system for 17 years.

What is your role at Summit Metro Parks?

DF: I assist others in creating and providing great programs that connect the public to nature-based education, recreation and outreach.

What's your favorite project you've worked on?

DF: My favorite project has been the creation of the "pop-up" nature center at Summit Lake. This project was intended to last for just a little over two months and is now nearing its third summer of activation! We also just learned that we will have a new, permanent home at the Akron Pump House. This nature center and surrounding areas (including shoreline improvements, picnic tables, grills, additional lighting and a permanent shelter) have made a significant difference for those living around Summit Lake and nearby communities.

You are featured in this year's ad campaign. Can you tell us about those photos?

DF: My family and I enjoy connecting with nature by walking the trails, fishing and singing around bonfires. All of those activities happen in Summit Metro Parks. These photos were taken at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm, which is located on Smith Road in Akron. It's a great spot to enjoy the trails and a visitors center in all seasons.

What's your best tip to enjoy the Metro Parks?

DF: We have so many ways to engage with the parks! A few of my favorites are to read a magazine, walk the trails, participate in a "School's Out Cookout" and attend "Breakfast in the Park" programs.

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Hampton & Friends

Activities for Adventurers of All Ages

TREASURE HUNT

Have fun on a hike and test your park knowledge ... X marks the spot.

1. Name of the park and trail?
2. What picture is on the trail marker?
3. A tree stump
4. A log
5. How many animals did you see?
6. How many benches did you see?
7. How many PICNIC TABLES did you see?

All oak leaves belong to only two families:
Red oak or White oak.

8. Red oak leaves have pointed tips.
9. White oak leaves have rounded tips.
10. ACORNS
11. A bird — What kind?
12. A small waterfall or stream
13. Name of a lake, pond or river
14. A maple leaf
15. How many bridges were on the trail?
16. How many people were on the trail?
17. How many dogs did you see?
18. A fern

19. A pine tree

20. What was the best part of the hike?

page 17 ENJOY Section

BEE Great: POLLINATE!

by Jen M. Harvey, Fund Development Manager / Grant Writer

How are donors like pollinators?

- They are attracted to new ideas that are just starting to bloom.
- Their actions create seeds that grow into something beautiful.
- They are hardworking and love what they do.

Did you know that Summit Metro Parks is cultivating honeybees in some of our parks with meadows? The bees have already produced a small amount of wildflower honey.

Donors to the Summit Metro Parks Foundation support projects like this that make our parks some of the sweetest around. Join them and BEE Great: Pollinate!

The Summit Metro Parks Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was established in 1991 to further the goals and mission of Summit Metro Parks. We are grateful to those who made gifts January 1 through December 31, 2018, whose names are listed here. These donations will support and create thriving parks that are a cornerstone of Summit County's quality of life, and benefit the park district's charitable, educational and scientific initiatives.

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