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GREEN ISLANDS

Summit Metro Parks Bimonthly Magazine



**Summit
Metro** 
Parks®

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Our parks are like green islands in an urban landscape.

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Green Islands can be downloaded online:
summitmetroparks.org

ON THE COVER

An SMP-led excavation leads to the discovery of features from the past.

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



Board of Park Commissioners



Jill M. Stritch Herb Newman S. Theresa Carter Rev. Dr. Curtis T. Walker Sr. Joel D. Bailey

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.

THE FALL HIKING SPREE.
Shield Assistance



Is attaching the hiking spree shield more challenging than hiking the eight trails? Summit Metro Parks volunteers will gladly attach it for you at no charge on the dates below.

HIKING SPREE SHIELD ASSISTANCE | 1 TO 3 P.M.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19
Liberty Park Nature Center
9999 Liberty Rd, Twinsburg 44087

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2
Summit Lake Nature Center
411 Ira Ave., Akron 44301

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 15, 22 & 29
F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm Visitors Center
1828 Smith Rd., Akron 44313

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7
Goodyear Heights Metro Park / Lodge
2077 Newton St., Akron 44305



Discover YOUR BACK YARD



IT'S MORE THAN DIRT

Improving your soil one native plant at a time

Kasey Krok,
Interpretive Naturalist

Dirt stains on your garden clothes? It's more interesting than you may think! The soil in your yard isn't just dirt — it's a hidden ecosystem with a carefully crafted composition. Planting native wildflowers, shrubs and trees is an effective way to revitalize and support that soil's health within your home landscape. These native plants can co-exist with natural fungal networks that together create a water, carbon and nitrogen highway system right beneath our feet. This microscopic exchange is crucial to getting nutrients

to the plants that need it most without using storebought chemicals. It's best to leave out pesticides too; this "living" soil ecosystem needs small insects and other invertebrates to break down organic material, such as fallen leaves, and cycle nutrients back into your garden's roots. If your soil still needs an extra boost, consider adding homemade compost as a simple way to introduce nutrients while lowering your carbon footprint and reducing waste. 🍃



Park Archaeologists

DIG INTO THE PAST

Megan Shaeffer
Supervisor of Cultural Resources



The Summit Metro Parks conservation department protects and manages not only the plants and wildlife within our parks, but the archaeological and historical sites and structures as well. Since 2016, SMP has had archaeologists and historians on staff to oversee our cultural resources. SMP was the first metropolitan park system in Ohio to have permanent staff dedicated to cultural resource management.

While the archaeologists are busy year-round, summers are earmarked for large fieldwork projects at significant sites within the park district. SMP's cultural resources staff is small, but careful planning and collaboration allows them to tackle larger projects while engaging with community partners and volunteers. This summer marks the sixth year that SMP has partnered with The University of Akron to host their Archaeological Field School class. Here, students learn professional skills and get experience working on an archaeological site.

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Cultural Resources staff and The University of Akron archaeological field school students excavating in the 2025 project area

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Since 2021, the Archaeological Field School has taken place at the Everett Knoll Complex Site, which is a large precontact (or prehistoric) site in the Cuyahoga River Valley. The site is on the National Register of Historic Places and dates to the Middle Woodland or “Hopewell” Period (about 100 BCE to 450 CE). The site is very large — over 67 acres — and extends across part of SMP’s Riding Run Conservation Area as well as Cuyahoga Valley

National Park property and property owned by private landowners. In the 1850s, a burial mound was discovered on a knoll on the site. Unfortunately, that burial mound was demolished by the construction of a schoolhouse, and the artifacts associated with it are lost. Later archaeological investigation in the 1970s yielded further evidence of the sacred nature of the knoll, uncovering human remains and other

* These items are held at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, which is currently carrying out the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation (NAGPRA) process for these artifacts.

ceremonial artifacts*. Indigenous occupation and settlement has been documented at archaeological sites all across the surrounding area, particularly during excavations carried out on National Park Service property throughout the Village of Everett.

Cultural Resources Seasonal Field Technician Zoe Brown excavating in the 2025 project area





Aerial photograph of the two earth ovens being investigated during the 2025 field season. The grid allows archaeologists to precisely record archaeological features such as these. Each square is a 1x1 meter unit.

On SMP property, the use of archaeological geophysical surveys in late 2023 and early 2024 helped identify possible locations of precontact activity. In 2024, archaeological testing and excavation revealed an “earth oven,” which is a place where food would have been cooked or roasted. This oven is at a surprisingly shallow depth, only a little more than a foot below the surface of the ground. It appears

as a circular patch of darkened earth, charred wood and rocks which have been cracked from their exposure to the high heat of cooking. In 2025, the excavation was expanded to study this feature and to reveal a second feature nearby at an even shallower depth. The next step for the archaeological team is to send samples for radiocarbon dating and/or botanical testing. It is hoped that the testing will not only date the archaeological site,

but provide insight as to how people were living here and the environment they encountered and shaped so long ago.

While this work takes time, our archaeologists are excited for the chance to eventually discover more information about the past use of the land we now love as Summit Metro Parks. Understanding our past helps us protect, interpret and connect people to the parks in the present day and beyond. 🍁

Explore

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

Monday, September 1 – November 16

SUBMIT PHOTOS FOR AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT

From September 1 through November 16, visitors may submit two entries for our Annual Amateur Photography Exhibit, which will be displayed at the Nature Realm Visitors Center and by virtual exhibit. Only two printed photographs will be accepted, and all images must be taken in areas managed by Summit Metro Parks. Where possible, please do not share contact information with other entrants. Entries should not be matted, framed or include watermarks, and should be one of the following sizes: 5"x7", 8"x10" or 11"x14" and printed on photo paper. You may drop off entries at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm (1828 Smith Rd., Akron) or mail them to 975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron OH 44313, Attn: Amateur Photography Exhibit. A completed entry form is required. Find the form at summitmetroparks.org.

SUBMIT ENTRIES FOR VERDANT WONDERS

Beginning September 1

Ohio residents are invited to submit their creative works for publication in Verdant Wonders, the park district's literary journal that focuses on nature and culture. Submissions of fiction, creative nonfiction, personal essays and poetry are welcome September 1 through December 31, 2025. Learn more about submission guidelines and fill out a submission form at summitmetroparks.org.

*Monday, September 1,
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. & 1 – 3 p.m.*

INTRO TO STAND-UP PADDLEBOARDING

Learn how to paddleboard and take a guided tour around the lake with a certified instructor. Minimum age is 13; ages 13 to 17 must be with an adult participant. Participants must wear closed-toe shoes and be able to swim. All equipment will be provided. Location subject to change based on water conditions. Cost: \$15/person. Registration required 📞 (8/22). SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

*Wednesday, September 3,
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.*

NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist for an entertaining lesson in nature drawing. Bring a sketchbook, pencil and a sense of humor. Beginners are welcome. Registration required 📞 (8/27). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Wednesday, September 3, 1 – 2 p.m.

VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist online for this entertaining virtual lesson in nature drawing. No experience is necessary; all you need are pencils, paper and a sense of humor. Registration required 📞 (8/27). 📺 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering.

Thursday, September 4, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

GOOD GARDEN TALKS: GARLIC PLANTING

Join us in collaboration with Let's Grow Akron and OSU Extension for tips on planting garlic this fall for a tasty garden harvest next season. In the event of inclement weather, the program will be held indoors. SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron



Friday, September 5, 12 – 2 p.m.

NATURE SAUNTER

Appreciate nature's seasonal transition at a leisurely pace with a stroll along the 1.4-mile Old Mill Trail. Enjoy a beverage and nature conversation afterward. FR/Brushwood Area: 4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield 🍷

Friday, September 5, 3 – 4:30 p.m.

WALK IN THE WOODS

Hike with a naturalist on the 0.9-mile Fernwood Loop to check a trail off your Fall Hiking Spree form. As we walk, we will explore the hidden complexities of forest habitats and search for signs of wildlife. FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron 🍷

Friday, September 5, 6 – 8 p.m.

SUNSET SPREE HIKE

Learn about this year's Fall Hiking Spree sustainability theme and enjoy the setting sun with a 2.8-mile round trip from Summit Lake Nature Center to the Wilbeth Trailhead and back. SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron 🍷

Saturday, September 6, 9 – 10:30 a.m.

FALL WARBLER WALK

Enjoy the fall weather with a walk along the 1.1-mile Redwing Trail to look for migrating warblers. F/Tuscarawas Meadows Area: 2620 Harrington Rd., Akron 🍷

Key



CALL: 330-865-8065 Advance registration required, beginning at 10 a.m. on the date in parentheses.



ZOOM: ZOOM.US/JOIN
Key in the Meeting ID number.



WEB: bit.ly/SMPEvents Register online beginning on the date in parentheses.

(date) Registration start date

\$ Fee



Fall Hiking Spree credit

BHT Bike & Hike Trail

CV Cascade Valley

DLQ Deep Lock Quarry

FASN F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm

F Firestone

FR Furnace Run

FT Freedom Trail

GYH Goodyear Heights

G Gorge

HH Hampton Hills

LP Liberty Park

MF Munroe Falls

NR Nimisila Reservoir

ONW O'Neil Woods

SC Silver Creek

SFB Springfield Bog

SLNC Summit Lake Nature Center

SR Sand Run

TT Towpath Trail

WH Wood Hollow

**Saturday, September 6, 2 p.m. –
Sunday, September 7, 11 a.m.**

TENT CAMPING FOR FAMILIES



Families with children ages 13 and younger are invited to join naturalists for a fun and relaxing overnight tent camping experience! Join us in partnership with Syatt (See

you at the Top) for guided nature hikes, campfires, s'mores and games. Please bring your own camping equipment, including food, sleeping gear, toiletries and chairs. No gear? No problem! Request a free camping kit with essentials during registration, available while supplies last. *Registration required* 📞 (8/8). **SC/Lake House Area: 4877 South Medina Line Rd., Norton**

Saturday, September 6, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

TWILIGHT BAT HIKE

Hike the 1.2-mile Pheasant Run Trail as the sun sets to hopefully observe bats and learn about the amazing ways they support healthy ecosystems and humans. Please bring a flashlight. The hike will begin by the Lake House parking lot. **SC/Pheasant Run Area: 5000 Hametown Rd., Norton** 🦉

KIDS IN THE GARDEN



Join us in collaboration with Let's Grow Akron for weekly hands-on gardening activities for children of all ages. Seed, sow, water, harvest and enjoy! Each week we'll have a game or craft, garden activity and a snack themed around what is growing and ready to harvest in the garden. In the event of inclement weather, the program will be held indoors.

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Thursday, September 4

Thursday, September 11

Thursday, September 18

Thursday, September 25

Beginning Sunday, September 7

SELF-GUIDED STORY TRAIL: THE EARTH & I

Enjoy a late summer walk along the 1.3-mile Old Mill Trail while following a self-guided story trail based on the book "The Earth & I." This experience will be available through September 28. **FR/Brushwood Area: 4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield** 🦉

Sunday, September 7, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

SWALLOWS AND SWIFTS

Join a naturalist to learn about the fascinating lives and migratory journeys of these insect-gobbling birds! We'll meet in the shelter for a short presentation, then stroll the 0.6-mile Bluebird Trail to observe our new chimney swift tower and look for these aerial acrobats in action. **LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg** 🦉

Sunday, September 7, 1 – 2 p.m.

FERNWOOD STROLL

Join a naturalist for a hike along the 0.9-mile Fernwood Loop. We'll be on the lookout for who's around and any seasonal happenings as summer begins to wind down. **FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron** 🦉

Sunday, September 7, 2 – 4 p.m.

GUIDED FOREST THERAPY

Feeling ready to slow down and reconnect to the present moment? Do you feel most grounded and nurtured when spending time with nature? During this immersive experience, participants will be guided through a series of invitations that allow us to deepen our connection to our senses, our awareness and the interconnectedness with the world around us. *Registration required* 📞 (8/20). **F/Tuscarawas Meadows Area: 2620 Harrington Rd., Akron**

Sunday, September 7, 4 – 5 p.m.

CONCERT AT LIBERTY PARK: WESTERN RESERVE BIG BAND

Bring your chair or blanket and swing along with the Western Reserve Big Band! Join us for an afternoon of toe-tapping rhythms as this 20-piece ensemble transports you back to the golden age of jazz and swing. Popcorn and lemonade will be provided. **LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg**

Tuesday, September 9, 1 – 3 p.m.

NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist for an entertaining lesson in nature drawing. Bring a sketchbook, pencil and a sense of humor. Beginners are welcome. *Registration required* 📞 (8/27).

LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Tuesday, September 9, 7 – 8 p.m.

MUSIC IN THE PARK – SEASON FINALE

Enjoy a finale performance by the Metro Parks Ensemble! The concert will be inside Himelright Lodge for a perfect end-of-season setting. **CV/Himelright Lodge: 1212 Cuyahoga St., Akron**



**Thursday, September 11,
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

NATURE COLLAGE

Let's make a beautiful nature-inspired collage using recycled paper! Join our interpretive artist for this easy, fun lesson. All materials will be provided. *Registration required* 📞 (9/4). **FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron**

Thursday, September 11, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

LIL' SPROUTS

This biweekly program is designed to engage young children and accompanying adults in the wonderful world of gardening. Each class builds upon the last and will be centered on what's growing and ready to harvest! Adults are asked to actively participate with children during the program. *Registration required* 📞 (8/29). **SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron**

Thursday, September 11, 1 – 2 p.m.

VIRTUAL: NATURE COLLAGE

Let's make a beautiful nature-inspired collage using recycled paper! Join our interpretive artist for this easy, fun lesson. *Registration required* 📞 (9/4). 📺 A list of materials and a Zoom invite will be emailed after registering.



KINDEREALM: FISHIES

Children ages 3 to 5 and their adult companions can get hooked and learn all about our fishy friends! We will be learning with a story, craft and fun activities. *Please make other arrangements for younger children unable to remain in infant seats or strollers.* Registration required 📞 (9/3).

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, September 10
MF/Shady Shelter: 521 S. River Rd.,
Munroe Falls

Wednesday, September 17
FR/Brushwood Area: 4955 Townsend Rd.,
Richfield

Wednesday, September 24
SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Friday, September 12, 10:30 – 11 a.m. SUMMER NATURE TALES

In an interactive story time, young children and their adult companions can explore what's happening in nature as summer comes to an end. Make it a fun, family-friendly morning by exploring the park or visiting the Nature Play area after the program. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Friday, September 12, 7 – 9 p.m. GET TO KNOW COYOTES

Join a naturalist on Seneca Deck to explore one of Ohio's most beautiful, and most misunderstood creatures: the coyote. We'll chat for a bit, then take a 0.9-mile hike on Fernwood Loop to listen for their exciting calls. Bring a flashlight. FASN/Seneca Deck: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron 📞

Saturday, September 13, 9 – 10:30 a.m. FALL SPREE HIKE

Join a naturalist on the 1-mile Prather Trail and cross one trail off your Fall Hiking Spree! Along the way we will discuss the park's history and explore how restoration efforts have created a haven for native plants and wildlife. CV/Valley View Area: 1134 Cuyahoga St., Akron 📞

Saturday, September 13, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. HAND-OFF RIDE: AKRON BIKE CLUB

Join us in collaboration with South Street Ministries to meet up with the Akron Bike Club for a group bike ride to House Three Thirty and beyond. This experience is designed to introduce riders ages 12-25 to road cycling and the Akron Bike Club. All riders are responsible for obeying traffic laws and practicing road cycling safety. Please bring your own helmet and bicycle to participate. Helmets are required. TT/Mustill Store Trailhead: 57 W. North St., Akron

Saturday, September 13, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. TENT CAMPING WORKSHOP

Families are invited to a fun introductory camping experience led by naturalists. We will offer fishing, hiking, upcycled crafting, simple campfire cooking, a nature color-coded search for children, time in a tent and relaxing forest bathing. SC/Lake House Area: 4877 South Medina Line Rd., Norton

Saturday, September 13, 1 – 3 p.m. WHAT'S IN THE MEADOW

Join a naturalist as we investigate what is living in the meadow! Meadows are vibrant ecosystems teeming with life, including bees, beetles, rabbits, birds and more. Fluttering butterflies and darting dragonflies may grace us with a fly-by! Some nets and jars will be provided, or bring your own. A hat and boots are recommended. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 📞

Saturday, September 13, 2 – 4 p.m. NATURE WRITING WORKSHOP

Join a writer-turned-naturalist for a session on writing about nature, cultural history and the environment. Bring work to learn how to help it reach its full potential or get started on something new. If you bring work, it must follow the Verdant Wonders submission guidelines (available at summitmetroparks.org). Registration required 📞 (9/5). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Sunday, September 14, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. RECREATION OPEN HOUSE

Have you ever wanted to try archery, kayaking or fishing? Now's your chance! Join us for a morning of hands-on recreational opportunities. All equipment and materials are provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants must wear closed-toe shoes and dress to be outdoors and get wet. Archery: ages 9 and up. Kayaking: ages 13 and up, must be able to swim. Canoes will be available for families with small children. Fishing: all ages, current Ohio fishing license required for adults. Meet at Maple Shelter. MF/Lake Area: 521 S. River Rd., Munroe Falls

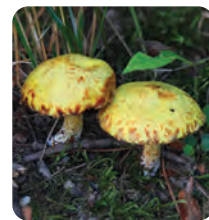
Sunday, September 14, 12 – 1:30 p.m. NATURE DRAWING FOR KIDS

Join our interpretive artist for this entertaining lesson in nature drawing for kids ages 6 to 12. All materials will be provided. Registration required 📞 (9/5). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Sunday, September 14, 1 – 2:30 p.m. PINE TREE SPREE

What makes a forest more than a group of trees? Hike the 2-mile Piney Woods Trail to earn spree credit and discover the positive impacts of native tree plantings in your Summit Metro Parks. GYH/Pioneer Area: 550 Frazier Ave., Akron 📞

Sunday, September 14, 1 – 3 p.m. WOODLAND MUSHROOMS



Join a naturalist on a walk through the woods as we explore the fascinating world of fungi! Discover the diverse shapes, colors and sizes of various mushrooms, and learn to identify key types such as boletes, jellies, corals and polypores. Learn about the secret underground world of fungi and its vital role in our ecosystems. FR/Brushwood Area: 4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield 📞

Sunday, September 14, 2 – 3 p.m. VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR KIDS

Join our interpretive artist online for this entertaining virtual lesson in nature drawing for kids ages 6 to 12. All you need is a pencil and paper. Registration required 📞 (9/5). 📺 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registration.

Wednesday, September 17, 6 – 8 p.m.

S'MORES AND MORE BONFIRE



Drop by to celebrate the end of summer around the campfire! We will play nature-themed games, tell family-friendly stories and eat plenty of s'mores (while

supplies last). Bring a camp chair or blanket. FASN/Campfire Area: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Wednesday, September 17, 6 – 7 p.m.

MACROINVERTEBRATES: MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

There's more beneath the surface than meets the eye. Hiding in streams under rocks and in the sediment, macroinvertebrates make their homes. A vital part of the stream ecosystem, they can also help us determine the quality of the water. Join us in partnership with Summit Soil and Water Conservation District to learn more about the amazing biodiversity of macroinvertebrates and how these tiny insects can help us study streams. SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Wednesday, September 17, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

FLIGHT PLAN: BIRDS & BEYOND

Join the Greater Akron Audubon Society and fellow bird enthusiasts to learn more about your local chapter of this national organization. From community science to bird walks and advocacy to outreach, there are so many ways to get involved and protect birds! FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Thursday, September 18,
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist for an entertaining lesson in nature drawing. Bring a sketchbook, pencil and a sense of humor. Beginners are welcome. Registration required 📞 (8/27). SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Thursday, September 18, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

ROCK 'N' ROLL: AN OVERVIEW OF LOCAL GEOLOGY

Join us in collaboration with South Street Ministries as we examine the rock formations, soil layers and mineral deposits along the Bike & Hike trail for a 9-mile ride at a casual pace. Please bring your own bike and helmet to participate. Helmets are required to participate. BHT/SR 33 Lot: 64 W. Streetsboro Rd., Boston Heights

Thursday, September 18,
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

HOMESCHOOLERS: AMAZING ANTS

Homeschoolers ages 7 to 12: Unearth the fascinating world of ants! Discover what makes these tiny creatures so unique, view them up close using microscopes and learn how to make an ant farm at home.

Registration required 📞 (9/11). LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Thursday, September 18, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

HOMEOWN HABITAT: BERRIES FOR BIRDS



Calling all people with yards or green spaces big and small: Join us for this monthly series and learn how to re-wild your home landscape. This month we'll talk about berry-

producing trees and shrubs that attract and support neighborhood wildlife. FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Friday, September 19, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

DATE AT THE LAKE

Bring a date and join us for a night of great views and memorable fun. Bring your creativity because it's going to get artsy! No babysitter? No problem! Drop the kids off downstairs for a simultaneous kids' nature painting program for ages 5-13. Registration required for grown-ups and kiddos 📞 (9/11).

SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Saturday, September 20, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

SENIOR CYCLING: HAND-OFF RIDE

Join us in collaboration with South Street Ministries to participate in the 13th annual Trails 'N' Rails event! This event consists of a 6-mile train trip and 6-mile cycling ride, where participants will board the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad, travel north to Botzum trailhead and cycle back to the Mustill Store for lunch together. Please bring your own bike, helmet and lunch. Helmets are required to participate. Registration required 📞 (9/10). TT/Mustill Store Trailhead: 57 W. North St., Akron

Saturday, September 20, 12 – 1:30 p.m.

BIRD NERDS: HAWKS AT A DISTANCE



Newbies and experts alike are welcome to join our ongoing series to unpack a unique bird identification challenge each month. After an indoor presentation, we'll

head out to the field to put our skills to the test. This month, we're testing the limits with those far away raptors. FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Saturday, September 20, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

TREES OF SUMMIT LAKE

Walk around Summit Lake while learning how to identify some trees as well as the stories they can tell us about the landscape. SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Saturday, September 20, 4 p.m. –
Sunday, September 21, 11 a.m.

TENT CAMPING FOR ADULTS

Join naturalists for an active overnight tent camping experience. We'll be hiking, cooking and adventuring as a group. Recreational activities may include fishing, orienteering and yard games. Please bring your own camping equipment, including sleeping gear, toiletries, snacks and a chair. No gear? No problem: Request a camping kit with essentials during registration, available while supplies last. Registration required 📞 (8/28). FR/Brushwood Area: 4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield

Saturday, September 20, 6 – 7 p.m.

OLD MILL HIKE

Join a naturalist for a hike along the 1.4-mile Old Mill Trail. We will be brushing up on our plant and bird ID while we talk about the interesting history surrounding Furnace Run. FR/Brushwood Area: 4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield 🥾

Sunday, September 21, 9 – 10:30 a.m.

FALL SPREE HIKE

Join a naturalist to hike the lush and hilly 1.9-mile Dogwood Trail! Learn about the natural history of the park as well as updates and improvements to the stream and surrounding environment while completing a Fall Hiking Spree trail. SR/Wadsworth Area: 1400 Sand Run Pkwy., Akron 🥾

Monday, September 22,
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. & 1 – 3 p.m.

ECO-PRINTING

In this art for adults program, we'll explore printing with natural materials to create beautiful fall-inspired patterns on fabric and paper. Dress for a mess and be prepared to be outdoors! The fee covers supplies and instruction. Cost: \$5/person. Registration required 📞 (9/10). LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Thursday, September 25, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
LIL' SPROUTS

See Thursday, September 11 description. Registration required 📞 (8/29). SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Thursday, September 25, 7 – 8 p.m.
PAWPAW APPRECIATION NIGHT

Discover Ohio's state native fruit, the pawpaw! Learn the history of this fruit, its benefits and how to grow it. You'll take home recipes and seeds (while supplies last) and sample its delicious banana-like flavor. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Friday, September 26, 1 – 3 p.m.
AUTUMN AT WALDO SEMON

Explore portions of Waldo Semon Conservation Area with a naturalist to see what signs of autumn are showing. We'll hike approximately 2.3 miles along National Park Service trails and visit Averill Pond along the way. Meet at the Stanford Trailhead parking lot near 6093 Stanford Rd., Peninsula. Waldo Semon Conservation Area: 6093 Stanford Rd., Peninsula



Saturday, September 27, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
MONARCH OPEN HOUSE

Stop in to celebrate the amazing migration of the iconic monarch butterfly. Learn about its lifecycle and cultural significance through hands-on activities, a Day of the Dead display, a story station and craft. You'll leave with knowledge about how you can help these imperiled pollinators. FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Saturday, September 27, 1 – 3 p.m.

FERNS: THE SHY NATIVE PLANT

Join a naturalist to explore the subtle beauty of native ferns — often overlooked, yet ecologically vital. Learn how these "shy" and unique plants thrive in shaded areas, quietly supporting ecosystems and offering shelter to wildlife. We will discuss how to mindfully incorporate these demure plants into your Wild Back Yard. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Sunday, September 28,
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. & 2 – 4 p.m.

LET'S GET CRAFTY: NATURE EMBROIDERY



Start an embroidery project with park staff while learning about the wildlife in your creation, then finish the project at your own pace. Guidance and supplies are

included in the registration fee. For crafty people 16 and older. Cost: \$10/person. Registration required 📞 (9/18). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Sunday, September 28, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

OHIO & ERIE CANAL PADDLE

Join a certified instructor on the Ohio & Erie Canal for a guided, round-trip kayak paddle from Summit Lake to Manchester Road. Learn about the canal's history and how it put Akron on the map. Minimum age is 13; ages 13 to 17 must be with an adult participant. Participants must wear closed-toe shoes and be able to swim. All equipment will be provided. Location subject to change based on water conditions. Cost: \$15/person. Registration required 📞 (9/19). SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Sunday, September 28, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

BACK YARDS GONE WILD: SEED COLLECTING

Join a naturalist to learn how to start beautiful, beneficial native plants from seed, including collection, storage and propagation techniques. After learning, get hands on as we collect seeds as a group and go home with some of your bounty! LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

OCTOBER



Wednesday, October 1, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist for an entertaining lesson in nature drawing. Bring a sketchbook, pencil and a sense of humor. Beginners are welcome. Registration required 📞 (9/24). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Wednesday, October 1, 1 – 2 p.m.

VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist online for this entertaining virtual lesson in nature drawing. No experience is necessary; all you need are pencils, paper and a sense of humor. Registration required 📞 (9/24). 📺 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering.

Wednesday, October 1, 4:30 – 6 p.m.

INTRO TO ARCHERY

Participants will learn international-style target archery and test their marksmanship at an outdoor range. All equipment and hands-on instruction provided. Must be 9 years old and 50 inches or taller. Cost: \$10/person. Registration required 📞 (9/24). F/Coventry Oaks Lodge: 40 Axline Ave., Akron

Wednesday, October 1, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

ARCHERY GAMES

Practiced participants will review international-style target archery principles and test their marksmanship through a variety of fun and challenging shooting games. All equipment and hands-on instruction provided. Must be 9 years old and 50 inches or taller. Previous archery experience preferred. Cost: \$10/person. Registration required 📞 (9/24). F/Coventry Oaks Lodge: 40 Axline Ave., Akron

Thursday, October 2, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist for an entertaining lesson in nature drawing. Bring a sketchbook, pencil and a sense of humor. Beginners are welcome. Registration required 📞 (9/24).

SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Thursday, October 2, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

CAMPFIRE COOKING: DESSERT

Dessert over a campfire, yum! We'll demonstrate techniques and share recipes to create delicious and easy desserts. Help us cook, then taste the results (while supplies last). LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd.,

Twinsburg

Thursday, October 2, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

GOOD GARDEN TALKS: HIGH TUNNEL & HOOP BENDING

Join us in collaboration with Let's Grow Akron and OSU Extension for a hoop bending demonstration and talk on season extension in hoop houses and low tunnels and maintaining soil health. Participants may bring up to six 10-foot pieces of 1/2" EMT to bend during the class for making a low tunnel at home. If you are interested in screening your soil for heavy metals, OSU Extension will have low-cost soil test kits available onsite for purchase, while supplies last. Akron Urban League: 440 Vernon Odom Blvd., Akron

Friday, October 3, 10:30 – 11 a.m.

AUTUMN NATURE TALES

Young children and their adult companions can enjoy an interactive autumn-themed story time. Make it a fun, family-friendly morning by exploring the park or visiting the Nature Play area after the program. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Friday, October 3, 7 – 9 p.m.

NOCTURNAL CREATURES NIGHT HIKE



Ever wonder what happens in the woods at night when the daytime critters go to sleep? Join a naturalist on the 2-mile Meadow Trail to earn spree credit

and see what our local wildlife is up to when the sun goes down! MF/Tallmadge Meadows Area: 1088 North Ave., Tallmadge 🐾

Beginning Sunday, October 5

SELF-GUIDED STORY TRAIL: THE EARTH & I

Enjoy a walk along the 0.6-mile Bluebird Trail while following a self-guided story trail based on the book *The Earth & I*. This experience will be available through October 26. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 🐾

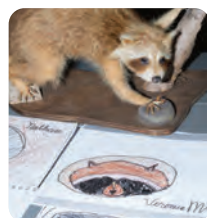
Sunday, October 5, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

WOODLAND MUSHROOMS

Join a naturalist on a walk through the woods as we explore the fascinating world of fungi! Discover the diverse shapes, colors and sizes of various mushrooms and learn to identify key types such as boletes, jellies, corals and polypores. Learn about the secret underground world of fungi and its vital role in our ecosystems. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Sunday, October 5, 12 – 1:30 p.m.

NATURE DRAWING FOR KIDS



Join our interpretive artist for this entertaining lesson in nature drawing for kids ages 6 to 12. All materials will be provided. Registration required 📞 (9/25).

FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Sunday, October 5, 2 – 3 p.m.

VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR KIDS

Join our interpretive artist online for this entertaining virtual lesson in nature drawing for kids ages 6 to 12. All you need is a pencil and paper. Registration required 📞 (9/25).

📺 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registration.

Sunday, October 5, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

SCARECROW BUILDING WORKSHOP

Bring your creativity and build a scarecrow to take home! A frame, bag for the head, markers, twine and straw will be provided. The clothes and creativity are up to you! We'll use t-shaped frames measuring approximately 75 inches tall and 40 inches wide. Registration required 📞 (9/25). LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Sunday, October 5, 3 – 4 p.m.

TERRIFYING TITANS: MEGAFaUNA

Halloween is known for monsters, so let's talk about the behemoths that once covered Ohio! Come learn about the megafauna that towered over all and how they were replaced by the fauna we have today. We will be hiking the grounds, so dress for the weather! FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Wednesday, October 8, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

SPREE WITH ME: AFTER WORK BIRD WALK



Don't let your 9 to 5 get in the way of completing the Fall Hiking Spree. Bird along the 1.1-mile Redwing Trail and check a spree trail off your list.

F/Tuscarawas Meadows Area: 2620 Harrington Rd., Akron 🐾

Fall FAMILY OUTING

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4
2 – 7 P.M.

Fall into autumn fun at this FREE event featuring lumberjack shows, hayrides, bonfires, naturalist activities, music, refreshments and more. A wheelchair-accessible hay wagon is available.

MUNROE FALLS METRO PARK
Lake Area: 521 S. River Rd.,
Munroe Falls





KINDEREALM: ACORNS

Children ages 3 to 6 and their adult companions will learn how the small acorn plays a mighty role in our forests through stories, crafts and outdoor activities. *Please make other arrangements for younger children unable to remain in infant seats or strollers.* Registration required 📞 (10/1).

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, October 8

FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Wednesday, October 15

LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Wednesday, October 22

F/Coventry Oaks Lodge: 40 Axline Ave., Akron

Thursday, October 9, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. NATURE COLLAGE

Let's make a beautiful nature-inspired collage using recycled paper! Join our interpretive artist for this easy, fun lesson. All materials will be provided. Registration required 📞 (10/2). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Thursday, October 9, 10 – 11:30 a.m. LIL' SPROUTS

This biweekly program is designed to engage young children and accompanying adults in the wonderful world of gardening. Each class builds upon the last and will be centered on what's growing and ready to harvest! Adults are asked to actively participate with children during the program. Registration required 📞 (9/26). SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Thursday, October 9, 1 – 2 p.m.

VIRTUAL: NATURE COLLAGE

Let's make a beautiful nature-inspired collage using recycled paper! Join our interpretive artist for this easy, fun lesson. Registration required 📞 (10/2). 📺 A list of materials and a Zoom invite will be emailed after registering.

Thursday, October 9, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

HOMEGROWN HABITAT: COLLECTING NATIVE SEEDS

Calling all people with yards or green spaces big and small! Join us for this monthly series and learn how to re-wild your home landscape. This month we'll get hands-on and collect, then process, native seeds. Please bring your own garden gloves and we'll supply the rest! FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Friday, October 10, 12 – 2 p.m.

NATURE SAUNTER

Appreciate the flora and fauna of autumn at a leisurely pace with a stroll along the 1.6-mile Buttonbush Trail. Enjoy a beverage and nature conversation afterward. LP/Pond Brook Conservation Area: 3973 E. Aurora Rd., Twinsburg

Friday, October 10, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

JACK-O'-LANTERN HIKE

Learn the lore of the glow-in-the-dark Jack-o'-lantern mushroom then hit the trail in search of it and other wonders of the night. Flashlights are unnecessary but hiking boots are recommended. GYH/Main Entrance: 2077 Newton St., Akron

Saturday, October 11,
11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

HUSKS & HIKING

Take a hike on the 1.6-mile Prairie Trail as fall comes into full force! We'll talk about what happens to flowers that are past their season and admire what's left behind. SFB/Prairie Trail: 1400 Portage Line Rd., Springfield Twp. 🥾

Saturday, October 11, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

SPOOKY "TAILS" AROUND THE CAMPFIRE

Go on a ghostly tour through Akron's haunted past and learn about local spirits whose stories linger, as well as fun facts about several captivating critters commonly associated with the supernatural. FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Sunday, October 12, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

DEEPER INTO THE QUARRY HIKE



Learn about the important role of the Berea sandstone quarries along the Cuyahoga River during the canal era and the many ways in which the sandstone

was put to use. DLQ/Quarry Trail: 5779 Riverview Rd., Peninsula

Sunday, October 12, 1 – 2 p.m.

STONE SOUP

Sharing really is caring. Bring your little ones to Pioneer Shelter for a classic story and cooking activity. GYH/Pioneer Area: 550 Frazier Ave., Akron

Sunday, October 12, 2 – 4 p.m.

FALL FOLIAGE HIKE

Take a trek on the 1.9-mile Spring Hollow Trail alongside a naturalist to earn Fall Hiking Spree credit while enjoying the beautiful autumn colors. We will explore what causes this annual display of color and other signs of the fall season. Wear sturdy footwear and be prepared for hilly terrain. HH/Main Entrance: 2925 Akron Peninsula Rd., Akron 🥾

KIDS IN THE GARDEN



Join us in collaboration with Let's Grow Akron for weekly hands-on gardening activities for children of all ages.

Seed, sow, water, harvest and enjoy!

Each week we'll have a game or craft, garden activity and a snack themed around what is growing and ready to harvest in the garden. In the event of inclement weather, the program will be held indoors.

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Thursday, October 2

Thursday, October 9

Thursday, October 16

Thursday, October 23

Thursday, October 30



Tuesday, October 14, 1 – 3 p.m.

NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist for an entertaining lesson in nature drawing. Bring a sketchbook, pencil and a sense of humor. Beginners are welcome. *Registration required* 📞 (9/24). LP/ Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Tuesday, October 14, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

PUMPKIN CARVING

Join us to create a seasonal work of art! BYOP (pumpkin, that is) or register to receive two free pumpkins per family. Carving utensils provided. Stay until the end to see our creations lit up with candles and crown the fan favorites! Event will take place in the shelter with a fire and marshmallows or move indoors in the case of inclement weather. *Registration required* 📞 (10/1). LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg



Thursday, October 16, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

HOMESCHOOLERS: LEAVE THE LEAVES

Homeschoolers ages 7 to 12: Ever wondered what might be hiding in the leaf litter? Let's learn why you should leave the leaves this fall through a lesson, activities and a short hike. Please dress for the weather. *Registration required* 📞 (10/9). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Thursday, October 16, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

GOOD GARDEN TALKS: SHARE THE HARVEST

Join us in collaboration with Let's Grow Akron and OSU Extension to enjoy a potluck from the harvest. Bring some of your garden's harvest or a seasonal dish to share. In the event of inclement weather, the program will be held indoors. GYH/Main Entrance: 2077 Newton St., Akron

Friday, October 17, 4:30 – 6 p.m. & 6:30 – 8 p.m.

ARCHERY GAMES

Practiced participants will review international-style target archery principles and test their marksmanship through a variety of fun and challenging shooting games. All equipment and hands-on instruction provided. Must be 9 years old and 50 inches or taller. Previous archery experience preferred. Cost: \$10/person. *Registration required* 📞 (10/8). F/Coventry Oaks Lodge: 40 Axline Ave., Akron

Friday, October 17, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

DATE AT THE LAKE

Bring a date and join us for a night of great views and memorable fun. Learn the art of pressing plants and take home your masterpiece just in time for Sweetest Day! No babysitter? No problem! Drop the kids off downstairs for a simultaneous kids' native plant program for ages 5-13. *Registration required for grown-ups and kiddos* 📞 (10/8). SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Saturday, October 18, 9 – 11 a.m.

BIRDING ON THE TOWPATH

Join a naturalist for birding along the accessible Towpath Trail. Bird expert or total novice, all are welcome! Binoculars will be available to borrow on a first-come, first-served basis. TT/Clinton Trailhead: 2749 North St., Clinton

Saturday, October 18, 12 – 1:30 p.m.

BIRD NERDS: SHOREBIRD BASICS

Newbies and experts alike are welcome to join our ongoing series to unpack a unique bird identification challenge each month. After an indoor presentation, we'll head out to the field to put our skills to the test. This month we'll be simplifying shorebirds. FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

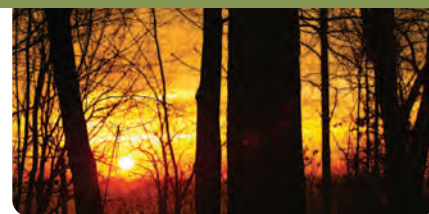
Beginning Sunday, October 19

SELF-GUIDED: BATS



they begin to hibernate for the season. CV/ Valley View Area: 1134 Cuyahoga St., Akron

Come learn all about our native, flying mammals: bats! Hike along the 1.1-mile Missing Link Trail through October 26 to learn all about our flying friends as



Sunday, October 19, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

SUNRISE SPREE HIKE

Rise and shine, it's spree time! Join a naturalist on a leisurely hike along the challenging 1.9-mile Dogwood Trail. We'll take our time, enjoying the sights and sounds of sunrise in the late fall forest. SR/Wadsworth Area: 1400 Sand Run Pkwy., Akron 📞

Sunday, October 19, 12 – 3 p.m.

SPOOKY SCAVENGER HUNT

Drop in for a self-guided scavenger hunt along the 0.6-mile Bluebird Trail to search for some spooky and not-so-spooky items. Return your completed list to the nature center front desk for a prize. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 📞



5 TO 7 P.M.

At this FREE event, visitors of all ages can explore the trucks and vehicles that help keep our parks beautiful while collecting treats from SMP staff. Costumes are encouraged for all ages!

Saturday, October 18

SC/LAKE HOUSE AREA:
4877 South Medina Line Rd., Norton

Saturday, October 25

GYH/GOODYEAR HEIGHTS LODGE:
2077 Newton St., Akron

Sunday, October 19, 1 – 3 p.m.

SHIELD ASSISTANCE

Is attaching the hiking spree shield more challenging than actually hiking the eight trails? Summit Metro Parks volunteers will gladly attach it for you at no charge. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg



Thursday, October 23, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

SENIOR CYCLING: FALL FOLIAGE TOUR

Join us in collaboration with South Street Ministries as we cycle along the Bike & Hike Trail to admire the fall foliage. During our stops, we will learn about the trees, their leaves and how trees prepare for winter. We will ride at a casual pace (10-12 mph) to the Boston Mills Trailhead and back — approximately 10 miles round trip. Please bring your own bike and helmet. Helmets are required to participate. BHT/SR 82 Lot: 685 W. Aurora Rd., Northfield

Thursday, October 23, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

LIL' SPROUTS

See Thursday, October 9 description. Registration required 📞 (9/26). SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Friday, October 24, 10:30 – 11 a.m.

AUTUMN NATURE TALES

Young children and their adult companions can enjoy an interactive autumn-themed story time. Make it a fun, family-friendly morning by exploring the park or visiting the Nature Play area after the program. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Friday, October 24, 6 – 7 p.m.

SPOOKY STORIES & SPECIES

Spooky stories and species make their way around this time of year! Let's learn about these so-called spooky species and how they're represented in literature. FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Saturday, October 25, 12 – 1:30 p.m.

PET ROCKS FOR KIDS

Kids of all ages are welcome to come and create their very own pet rock using natural materials. All you need to bring is a smile and some creativity — we'll provide the rest! Registration required 📞 (10/16). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Saturday, October 25, 1 – 5 p.m.

THE GREAT PUMPKIN ROLL

Join us in collaboration with South Street Ministries for a bike ride to Szalay's Farm & Market for a fun-filled family day! You can buy pumpkins, explore the corn maze and enjoy sweet treats. This is a 14-mile round trip ridden at a family-friendly, inclusionary pace. Please bring your own bike and helmet to participate. Helmets are required. Participants are responsible for the cost of admission to the corn maze, food, drink and pumpkin purchases. All purchases will be transported back to the Big Bend Trailhead by truck at no cost to participants. TT/Big Bend Trailhead: 1337 Merriman Rd., Akron

Saturday, October 25, 1 – 2:30 p.m.

RAPTOR ID

Join a naturalist as we look toward the skies to spot hawks, vultures, ospreys, owls and eagles. Learn key identification tips and tricks to quickly recognize these magnificent birds in flight. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Sunday, October 26, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

READING THE FORESTED LANDSCAPE

Ever wonder if the landscape around you always looked the way it does now? Chances are it hasn't! Learn some skills that can be used to read the forested landscape. CV/Valley View Area: 1134 Cuyahoga St., Akron

Sunday, October 26, 1 – 2:30 p.m.

GLACIAL GEOLOGY OF SUMMIT COUNTY

Learn how the last glacial event profoundly changed the Summit County landscape. See how Summit County looked 10,000 years ago: no trees or plants, just vast areas of sand, rocks, snow and ice. Learn about Lake Cuyahoga, a large glacial lake that once covered Akron to depths of over 100 feet. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Sunday, October 26, 2 – 4 p.m.

GUIDED FOREST THERAPY

Ready to slow down and reconnect to the present moment? Do you feel most grounded and nurtured when spending time with nature? During this immersive experience, participants will be guided through a series of invitations that allow us to deepen our connection to our senses, our awareness and the interconnectedness with the world around us. Registration required 📞 (10/15). FASN/Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron



Tuesday, October 28, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

LOONS FOR THE LOON-LOVERS

Join the Greater Akron Audubon Society and Professor of Biological Sciences at Ohio Northern University Jay Mager to discover the life history of the iconic common loon. Learn more about this poster child of the northern wilderness and how scientists and citizens are working to preserve loon populations. Meet in the West Room. GYH/Goodyear Heights Lodge: 2077 Newton St., Akron



Thursday, October 30, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

HOWL-O-WEEEN AT THE MOON

Join a naturalist at dusk to discover some of the park's most elusive and misunderstood residents: coyotes. After a short presentation, take a quiet stroll along the trail to call for these creatures in hopes they will respond. DLQ/Quarry Trail: 5779 Riverview Rd., Peninsula 🐾



SUMMIT METRO PARKS

Marvelous Monarchs:



Reyna Askew,
Community Engagement Manager

Monarchs complete a
multigenerational migration.

**Most monarchs traveling
north in spring and summer
only live around four weeks,
but towards the end of the
summer, monarchs lay eggs
for a super generation that
flies south and lives eight
times longer than their
parents and grandparents
— up to eight months!**

Witnessing the Magic of Migration in Our Metro Parks

As late summer blooms emerge, flashes of orange and black butterflies dance among goldenrod, ironweed, asters and bonesets. Each year, we have the incredible privilege to see one of nature's greatest migrations: the monarch butterfly's 3,000-mile journey from the U.S. and Canada — through Northeast Ohio — to the mountain forests of central Mexico.

Monarchs traveling through Summit County in late August to mid-September rely on our restored prairies, meadows and even home gardens for nectar-rich rest stops along their journey. A few great spots in the Metro Parks to look for monarchs include Springfield Bog's Prairie Trail, Liberty Park's Bluebird Trail and the restored golf course turned floodplain meadow at Cascade Valley Metro Park's Valley View Area.

The arrival of the monarchs in Mexico has coincided with the Día de los

Muertos celebration for generations.

In this region, monarch butterflies have become a cultural icon, seen by many as spirits and symbols of ancestors returning.

Despite our collective admiration for monarch butterflies, they face threats from habitat loss and climate change. The species is currently listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and proposed for federal protection by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Summit Metro Parks supports monarchs through habitat restoration, naturalist-led programs and planting demonstration gardens. You can help by planting native milkweed, joining volunteer projects, reducing pesticide use, leaving eggs and caterpillars in the wild and participating in the Wild Back Yards program to protect native habitat at home. 🍁

HERITAGE HIKERS

MAKE IT A FAMILY AFFAIR

*Rachel Whinnery,
Marketing Specialist*

The Fall Hiking Spree has become part of life for many Summit County families. Every year they come together for eight hikes. That's eight adventures. Eight possibilities to learn something new. Eight opportunities to appreciate nature. Eight chances to have deep conversations. Silly conversations. Conversations about the past that will reverberate into the future.

From parents and their children to longtime friends and newlyweds to the solo hiker, the Fall Hiking Spree offers the chance to make lasting memories. Take Heritage Hikers Sam and Anne, for example. The couple started the spree in 1977 when they moved to Akron from Pennsylvania. Exploring Summit Metro Parks was a way for them to stay involved in their new community and learn about the area.

When their daughter was born, Sam and Anne carried her on hikes, and she received

her hiking staff at 1 year old. They later had another child and, as a family, they hiked the spree every year until their kids moved out. These days they hike with their grandsons or another couple, continuing to make memories and share laughs.

When asked how she felt about having the title of Heritage Hiker, Anne said, "I don't need a title. I just like hiking."



Susan and Rick, her late husband, loved hiking the Bike & Hike Trail together.



Sam and Anne at the trailhead of one of their favorite parks

Heritage Hiker Susan received her hiking staff and first shield as a child in 1968. Her family did the spree every year, bringing along friends or kids from the youth group her parents led. When she got married, her new husband went too. And, of course, when they had kids of their own, they joined the tradition. Their son, Chris, received his hiking staff at only 6 months old after enjoying the trails from a backpack. He now works at Summit Metro Parks as a park ranger.

Susan continues doing the spree and hikes year-round. As for the Heritage Hiker moniker, she says, "It feels kind of cool. It says something about the spree lasting so long, and I've been part of that."

Over decades, these families set aside time to complete the annual challenge together. And thousands of others do, too. We can

only imagine the range of conversations that happen on our trails during the Fall Hiking Spree, and we're excited for you to share them with us this year. 🍀

[Are you a Heritage Hiker? If you started the Fall Hiking Spree between 1964 and 1977, and you haven't received your reward, you qualify for a FREE commemorative hiking staff medallion.]

2025 | Fall Hiking Event

THE FALL HIKING SPREE.

TO PARTICIPATE

Hike at least eight of the designated trails. After completing each hike, date your form. Hikes must be completed September 1 through November 30. Parks are open daily from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., unless otherwise noted.

First-year hikers earn a hiking staff and shield. **Returning hikers** earn the hiking shield. Hikes are **FREE** for all participants. Since the program is funded by Summit County tax dollars, out-of-county residents pay to receive their hiking rewards (\$10 for first-year hikers and \$5 for returning hikers).

WHERE TO GET YOUR REWARD

Administrative Offices

975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron 44313

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm
1828 Smith Rd., Akron 44313

Liberty Park Nature Center
9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 44087

Summit Lake Nature Center
411 Ira Ave., Akron 44301

Open:

Wed. through Sat.

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday

Noon to 5 p.m.

Closed: Mon. & Tue.

To receive your reward by mail:

Returning hikers may mail their **completed forms** along with a **self-addressed, stamped envelope** to:

Summit Metro Parks / Administrative Offices
975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron Ohio 44313

(Shields are mailed flat.)

Rewards are not available after March 31, 2026.

TOWPATH TRAIL

Summit Lake Nature Center
411 Ira Ave., Akron 44301

CASCADE VALLEY METRO PARK

Prather Trail / Valley View Area
1134 Cuyahoga St., Akron 44313

DEEP LOCK QUARRY METRO PARK

Quarry Trail
5779 Riverview Rd., Peninsula 44264

F.A. SEIBERLING NATURE REALM

Fernwood Loop
1828 Smith Rd., Akron 44313

FIRESTONE METRO PARK

Redwing Trail / Tuscarawas Area
2620 Harrington Rd., Akron 44319

FURNACE RUN METRO PARK

Old Mill Trail / Brushwood Area
4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield 44286

GOODYEAR HEIGHTS METRO PARK

Piney Woods Trail / Pioneer Area
550 Frazier Ave., Akron 44305

HAMPTON HILLS METRO PARK

Spring Hollow Trail / Main Entrance
2925 Akron-Peninsula Rd., Akron 44313

LIBERTY PARK

Bluebird Trail / Twinsburg Ledges Area
9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 44087

MUNROE FALLS METRO PARK

Meadow Trail / Tallmadge Meadows Area
1088 North Ave., Tallmadge 44278

SAND RUN METRO PARK

Dogwood Trail / Wadsworth Area
1400 Sand Run Pkwy., Akron 44313

SILVER CREEK METRO PARK

Pheasant Run Trail / Pheasant Run Area
5000 Hametown Rd., Norton 44203

SPRINGFIELD BOG METRO PARK

Prairie Trail
1400 Portage Line Rd., Springfield Twp. 44312

HIKER'S CHOICE

Hike any **ONE** of your favorite **SUMMIT METRO PARKS** trails.

~ This year's Fall Hiking Spree theme is **Greener Future**. Summit Metro Parks encourages our community to join us in small changes that reduce waste, conserve energy and support a thriving local ecosystem to benefit native wildlife and our community. ~



2025 Commemorative
Hiking Shield









SEP·OCT '25 | Vol. 66 No. 5


GREEN ISLANDS

Summit Metro Parks Bimonthly Magazine

975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron, OH 44313-5837

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>> 62ND ANNUAL <<

THE FALL HIKING SPREE®

2025

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY
OR GROUP HIKING FORM















PRIMARY PARTICIPANT

Primary Participant's Last Name	First Name	M.I.	FIRST-YEAR HIKER <input type="checkbox"/>	RETURNING HIKER <input type="checkbox"/>	SUMMIT COUNTY RESIDENT <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Address		City	State		Zip
Email		Phone			

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANT

Last Name	First Name	Zip	FIRST-YEAR HIKER <input type="checkbox"/>	RETURNING HIKER <input type="checkbox"/>	SUMMIT COUNTY RESIDENT <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Last Name	First Name	Zip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Last Name	First Name	Zip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Last Name	First Name	Zip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

☐ *Are you a Heritage Hiker? >>* If you started the FHS between 1964 and 1977 and haven't received your reward, please check the box for your *free* commemorative medallion and chain.

METRO PARK	TRAIL	SYMBOL	MILEAGE	CLASS	RATING	SIGNATURE (Optional)	DATE
TOWPATH / Summit Lake	(south from Nature Center to Wilbeth Rd. and back)		2.2	A / B	1		
CASCADE VALLEY	Prather		1.0	C	1		
DEEP LOCK QUARRY	Quarry		1.4	C	2		
FIRESTONE	Redwing		1.1	C	1		
FURNACE RUN	Old Mill		1.4	C	1		
GOODYEAR HEIGHTS	Piney Woods		2.0	C	2		
HAMPTON HILLS	Spring Hollow		1.9	C	3		
LIBERTY PARK	Bluebird		0.6	C	1		
MUNROE FALLS	Meadow		2.0	C	1		
NATURE REALM	Fernwood Loop		0.9	C	1		
SAND RUN	Dogwood		1.9	C	3		
SILVER CREEK	Pheasant Run		1.2	C	1		
SPRINGFIELD BOG	Prairie		1.6	C	1		
Hiker's Choice (SMP trails only)							

Rating: 1=Easy 2=Moderate 3=Strenuous
 Class: A=Multipurpose B=Accessible C=Basic D=Primitive
 Visit our website for rating and class definitions.



In 2025, we're *celebrating* a *Greener Future* for Summit Metro Parks and our community.

All trail mileage reflects **round-trip** hikes.

hikingspree.summitmetroparks.org • 330-867-5511 (weekdays) • 330-865-8065 (weekends) • 330-475-0029 (rangers after hours) • For emergencies, call 911

THIS FORM MAY BE REPRODUCED.