Winter E– Newsletter December—February 2010

Hibernation
Laura Hoople, Naturalist

Hibernation, and what it truly involves, is a mystery to many, even to scientists who study it. We often say many animals in Ohio hibernate- raccoons, opossums, skunks, squirrels and groundhogs. However, most of these animals do not truly hibernate; instead they will enter into a state of torpor during the coldest days. Torpor is a short period of inactivity where the animal's body temperature, metabolism and breathing rate drop slightly.

True hibernation, often called deep hibernation, is a strategy animals use to cope with winter weather and a lack of food. Hibernation means an animal is in a dormant state during the winter while living off stored body fat; it is characterized by a decrease in body temperature and heart rate, and a slowed metabolism. Ohio has only three animals that enter in deep hibernation: bats, ground squirrels and groundhogs.

The process for hibernation begins in the late summer and continues throughout fall. Take, for example, a groundhog. As summer ends they begin to eat and eat in an attempt to gain as much weight as possible; these are the fat stores that will sustain them over the winter months. When cold weather arrives the groundhog will retreat to its burrow, located deep enough underground to stay at least slightly above freezing and offer some protection from predators.

During hibernation, a groundhog's body temperature drops from 98° F to around 38° F. Its heart rate slows from 80 beats a minute to only 4-5 beats a minute. The breathing rate slows to only two or three breaths per minute. In this state of highly reduced body function, groundhogs are very difficult to awaken and typically appear frozen or dead if removed from their burrow midwinter.

They may occasionally raise their body temperature to near normal and may even wake once in a while. Some hibernators will wake more frequently, even every few days, and may eat a bit and go to the bathroom.

What exactly causes animals to enter hibernation is not known but scientists have been looking at a substance called Hibernation Inducement Trigger (HIT), found in the blood of hibernating animals. Experiments have shown that when HIT is taken from a hibernating animal in winter then injected in an active animal in spring, the active animal will begin hibernating. This, along with other factors like length of daylight or an internal biological clock may cause animals to prepare for winter's sleep.

(Continued on page 2)

Wilson Nature Preserve Now Open

The James L. and Frances Wilson Nature Preserve was officially dedicated on Friday October 16th. The 105 acre preserve was purchased with an $845,000 grant from the Clean Ohio Fund. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson generously donated a portion of the land value to make the purchase possible. The preserve lies adjacent to Sycamore Park, making the total land area of the park and preserve 158 acres. The park and preserve now Feature over three miles of hiking trails. The wooded ridge tops provide excellent winter views of the East Fork of the Little Miami River. Make sure to get out this winter and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Pictured above at the dedication ceremony (James Wilson, Park Commissioner Bill Stearns, Frances Wilson, Park Commissioner Dave Anspach, Park District Director Chris Clingman, and Park Commissioner Ken Stewart)

Groundhogs (continued from page 1)

When spring arrives, hibernators must have a way to raise their bodily functions back to normal. Some use violent shivering to produce heat. Others burn a specialized kind of fat, called brown fat, which is stored across the neck and shoulders. Brown fat is not used during hibernation; it is saved and burned only as an animal emerges from hibernation. As brown fat cells burn fuel in a process called nonshivering thermogenesis, they release energy directly as heat helping to warm the body more quickly. Core body parts like the heart and brain are warmed first; extremities are warmed last.

Many animals appear quite drowsy as they are first arousing from hibernation, leading some scientists to believe that the state entered into during hibernation is quite different from a prolonged sleep, a state that would leave the animal well rested. All hibernators, however, are very hungry when they first emerge and immediately set about finding food, finding mates and then, each fall, beginning the cycle again.

Park District News
Chris Clingman, Director

In November the Park District was awarded a Cooperative Boating Facility Grant from the Ohio department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft. This $105,000 grant will be used to improve ADA access at the Chilo Lock 34 Park boat ramp and provide an additional 100 feet of courtesy dock. The grant covers 100% of the cost as the Division of Watercraft continues to work with local agencies to improve boating opportunities along the Ohio River. Bass fisherman have taken advantage of the ramp and this coming summer they are already 5 tournaments scheduled with up to 280 boats participating in the different tournaments. These tournaments draw fisherman throughout southern Ohio and the Tri State.

A thank you to Jordan Shouse, Andrew Bach, and Dan Turner who each have completed Eagle Scout projects at Sycamore Park and the Wilson Nature Preserve. Dan built a rain garden and planted trees near the Sycamore #2 Shelter. Andrew corrected a drainage problem and planted trees on an eroding slope in the Wilson Nature Preserve. Jordan completed a trail stream crossing project that connected the new Wilson Preserve to Sycamore Park.

The Park District would also like to give a special thank you to Ruth Nester for researching the history of the land that is now Sycamore Park. Ruth put together a small book of information that the park staff can use with programs and to help celebrate the upcoming 40th anniversary of the Park District. An application to create a park district was approved on February 5, 1970 by then Probate Judge Charles Jackson. Sycamore Park became the first park of the district in 1971.

The steam engines located in Chilo Lock 34 Park, that were donated by BB Riverboats received a new coat of paint thanks to the J. Mack Gamble Fund of the Sons and Daughters of the Pioneer Rivermen. These engines are from the last steam powered boat used by US Army Corps of Engineers, the *Wakerobin*. The engines were built by the Frisbie Engine and Machine Company in Cincinnati and were considered the best of their time. Currently there are just three pairs of the engines left. One set is in private ownership and one set is on display at the Smithsonian. The Park District is working with the Sons and Daughters of the Pioneer Rivermen to build a shelter for the engines and create display to explain how steam engines work.

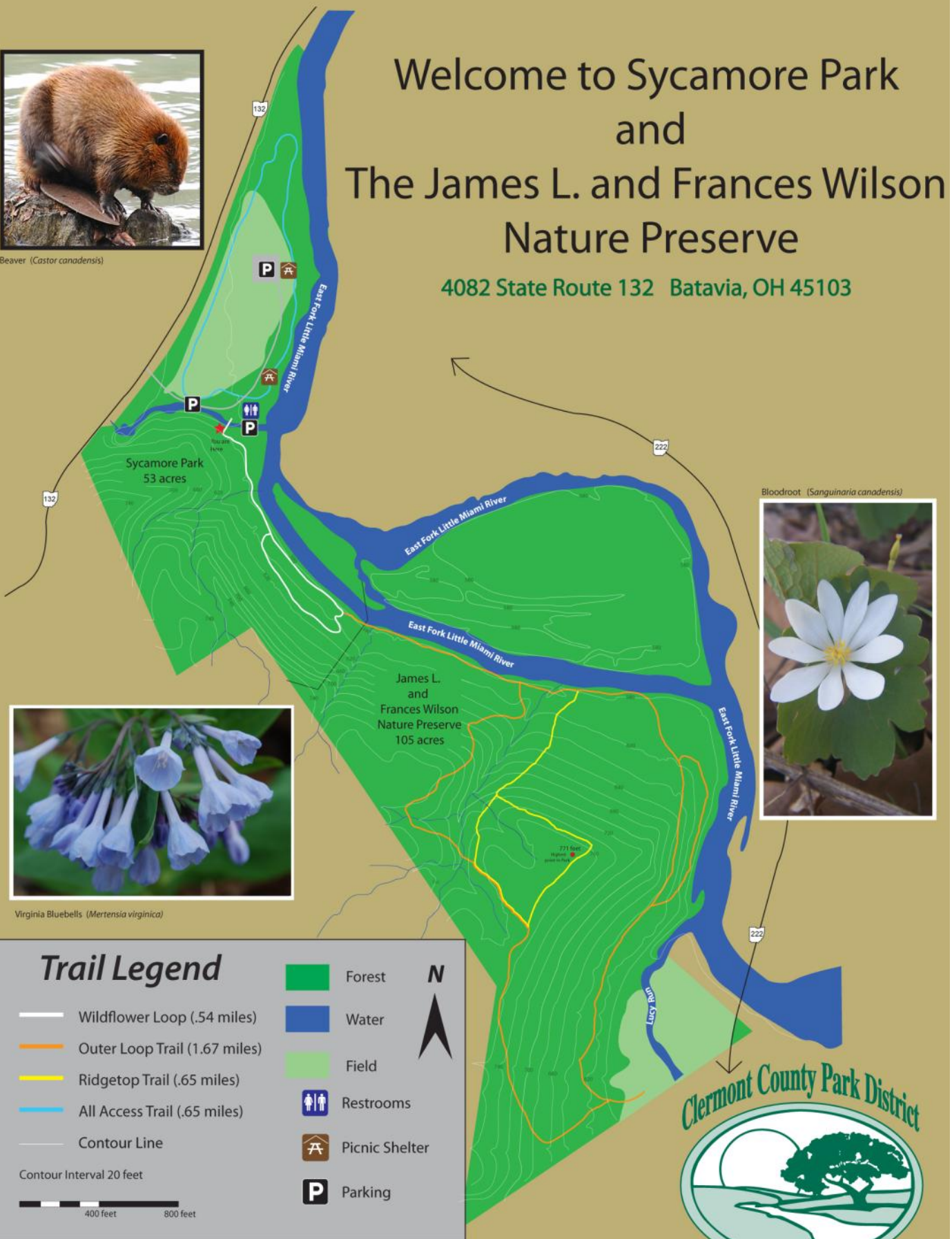
Steam engines from the *Wakerobin*

The Fall Back Into Time event generated over $1000 in donations to be used at Chilo Lock 34 Park. These funds are kept in the Park District's Greater Cincinnati Foundation Fund which can be used for matching grants and special projects in the parks. If you would like to make a donation to support the parks, contact Park District director Chris Clingman at 513-732-2977, or mail a check payable to the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Clermont County Park District Fund to the Park District administrative office.

Welcome to Sycamore Park and The James L. and Frances Wilson Nature Preserve

4082 State Route 132 Batavia, OH 45103

Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)



Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)

Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*)

Clermont County Park District

www.parks.clermontcountyohio.gov

Autumn Naturalist Programs
December— February

$ Program has a fee

Pre-registration is required

Winter Night Hike

Friday December 4
6:00 pm
Sycamore Park
Even though the days are short and the nights are long, the forest is still active with wildlife. Join the naturalist for a nocturnal adventure as we look for raccoons, listen for owls and see what other nocturnal wildlife we can find. Meet at the information kiosk.

Winter is for the Birds

Wednesday December 9
6:30 pm
Hartman Log Cabin
If you've always wanted to create a backyard bird feeding station, now is the time. Find out all you need to know to attract goldfinches, cardinals, sparrows, woodpeckers and more.

Winter Bird Count

Saturday January 9
8:30 am - 12:00 pm
Sycamore Park
Kelley Nature Preserve
Crooked Run Nature Preserve
Join Park District staff and volunteers as we conduct our annual census of our local bird residents. Beginners and advanced birders are welcome. Pre registration is required. Please call 513.876.9013 to sign up.

Duck Decoy Carving Classes

Saturdays in January
(9, 16, 23 & 30)
1:00—4:00 pm
Chilo Lock 34 Park
Cost $25.00

Join veteran decoy carver Wayne McClain for an introductory class on decoy construction and painting. Each participant will get to make and take their own drake canvasback decoy home. The $25.00 fee includes all materials needed for the class. Participants may bring their own carving tools if they wish. Registration is limited, so call to sign up now. Call 513.876.9013 to register.

Winter Hike

Saturday January 23
10:00 am
Sycamore Park
Beat the winter blues by getting outside and enjoying the crisp winter air. We'll hike and explore all of the trails on the new James L. and Frances Wilson Nature Preserve. Meet at the bridge.

Owl Prowl

Friday January 29
6:00 pm
Crooked Run
Nature Preserve
Winter is an excellent time to go "owling". Walk with a naturalist as we try to lure in one of these nocturnal wonders. Meet at the visitor center.

Maple Syrup for Homeschoolers

Monday February 8
11:00 am
Pattison Park Lodge

Discover the process of making maple syrup with your homeschooler. See where syrup comes from, how it's made, and even taste a few sweet samples of our tasty syrup. Pre registration is required. $2.00 fee per child. Please call 513.876.9013 to sign up.

Backyard Sugaring

Saturday February 13
11:00 am
Pattison Park Lodge

Visit the Pattison Park sugar bush to learn all about making maple syrup. Follow the process step by step, and see how you can make your very own maple syrup right in your backyard. Please call 513.876.9013 to sign up.

Attention Volunteers!

The Park District is currently seeking volunteers to assist the naturalist staff during our maple syrup field trips in February of 2010. If you enjoy working outside and learning more about the maple syrup process, and are available on weekdays, then please give us a call at 513.876.9013.

Attention Scout Leaders!

The Park District is now offering after school maple syrup programs for scout groups. Take your own private tour of our sugar bush, see how syrup is made, and sample some of our tasty treats.

Available dates

Monday February 8th	5:30 pm
Wednesday February 17th	5:30 pm
Thursday February 18th	5:30 pm

Cost is $2.00 per person, and space is limited. If you would like to sign up your scout troop, please call 513.876.9013.

Naturalist Program Fee Chart

Effective January 1, 2010 the Clermont County Park District will institute fees for their naturalist programs. The fees will affect school programs and private programs. Most public programs will remain free. Fees for school programs will begin in September of 2010.

School/Private Program Fees

In– park program . . . . . $2.00 per person

Offsite/Outreach program

$35.00 for first program
$20.00 additional programs

If you have any questions about the program fees, or would like to schedule a naturalist program, please call the Naturalist Office at 513-876-9013.

Save the Date

Pancakes in the Park

Saturday March 13
Pattison Park Lodge
8:30 am—11:30am

More details to follow in the spring newsletter.

Sponsor A Bucket Application

For $25.00 visitors can have their name placed on one of the sap buckets along the trail during the *Pancakes in the Park* event. Each bucket sponsor will also receive two complimentary tickets to the pancake breakfast and a jar of pure maple syrup directly from the Pattison Park sugar bush . All proceeds will benefit the Park District's Naturalist Programs.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ *E– Mail Address* _____

Description for sponsor sign—Limit 4 lines of text, 15 characters per line (Please Print)

_____

_____

_____

Send Check To:
Clermont County Park District
2228 US Highway 50
Batavia, OH 45103

Nature Notes
Keith Robinson, Naturalist

December

Backyard bird feeders stocked with suet, sunflower and thistle seed will attract a variety of hungry birds including: goldfinches, juncos, white-throated sparrows, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, red-bellied woodpeckers, downy and hairy woodpeckers.

Mistletoe can be spotted by their green leaves in the tops of trees along the Ohio River. A southern plant, mistletoe doesn't grow too far north of the Ohio River but is quite common along US Highway 52 between Chilo and New Richmond. An evergreen parasitic plant, it can easily be seen all winter as the trees are dormant and without leaves.

January

Listen for the soft hooting of Great Horned Owls at night. One of the earliest nesting birds in Ohio, females will lay their eggs in mid to late January.

Jefferson Salamanders begin migrating to ponds and vernal pools to breed and lay their eggs, often under a layer of ice.

February

The first sunny day with above freezing temperatures will begin the maple syrup process. Sap begins to flow from the roots up the tree to feed the buds.

Bald Eagles can be spotted occasionally soaring above the Ohio River at Chilo Lock 34 Park and Crooked Run Nature Preserve. Late February is the beginning of the bald eagle nesting season in Southern Ohio.

Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist Program Opportunities

Mission: To promote awareness and citizen stewardship of Ohio's natural resources through science based education and community service.

When: 9 am—4:00 pm Wednesdays
March 3— May 5, 2010
Where: Various park districts, nature preserves, and Extension offices in Southwest Ohio.
Cost: $150.00
To request an application visit www.montgomery.osu.edu
Or call 937-224-9654 or 937-372-9971

Sponsored by the OSU Extension Miami Valley Extension and Education Research Area
Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Fayette, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Preble and Warren Counties

Picnic Shelter Rentals

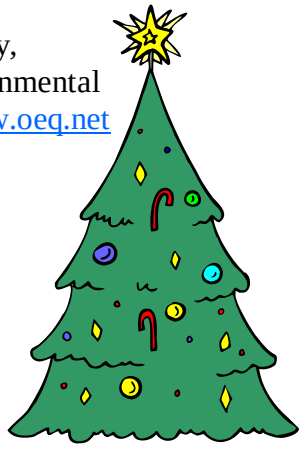
The Park District has picnic shelters for rent at Chilo Lock 34 Park, Sycamore Park, and Pattison Park for your summer picnic or family gathering. Call the Park District administrative office at 513.732.2977 to make your reservation or check on availability.

Park/Shelter	***Capacity***	***Fee***
Chilo Lock 34 Park	50	$50
Pattison Park	150	$75
Sycamore Woods	50	$50
Sycamore #2	150	$75

Christmas Tree Recycling

The Park District is once again accepting Christmas Trees for recycling. Live trees can be dropped off at Pattison Park lakeside from January 4 — 15th.Trees will be chipped and mulched. All decorations must be removed from the trees.

For other drop off locations throughout Clermont County, contact the Office of Environmental Quality at 732-7894 or www.oeq.net

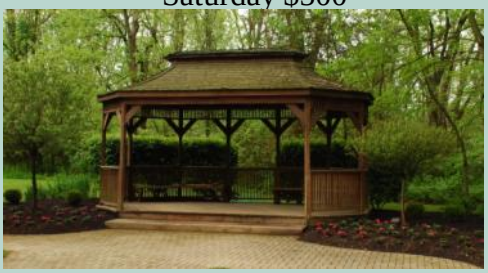


Pattison Lodge and Gazebo & Hartman Log Cabin Now Taking Reservations for 2011.

Pattison Lodge and Gazebo Rental Rates

In Season (May 15— October 15)
Monday through Thursday $200
Friday and Sunday $475
Saturday $550

Out of Season (October 16—May 14)
Monday through Thursday $200
Friday and Sunday $425
Saturday $500



Hartman Log Cabin Rental Rates

In Season Rates (May 15-October 15)
Monday through Thursday $100
Friday through Sunday $150
**Includes the use of the picnic shelter*

Out of Season Rates (October 16—May 14)
Monday through Sunday
$100

Fall Back Into Time

This past October, the Clermont County Park District was one of eleven organizations that participated in a fundraising event to promote the areas historical societies and museums. Each participating agency sponsored a historical character and residents were asked to vote for their favorite character by sending in their $1.00 vote.

The votes have been counted and we are proud to announce that the Chilo Lock 34 Visitor Center and Museum's character, ***Ralph the Diver*** has been named the winner with 1136 votes. Ralph the diver is based on Ralph Lindsey, a former diver and lockman at Chilo Lock and Dam #34 and Meldahl Dam from 1947-1979. The Park District received $1136 in donations. To view the totals visit www.fallbackintotime.com

Thank you to everyone who voted. If you'd like to come and have your picture taken as "Ralph the Diver" visit the Chilo Lock 34 Visitor Center and Museum.

Special thanks to the *Friends of the Jennie Wade* for sponsoring and organizing the event. The fundraiser collected $4254 for local historical societies and museums.

Fall Back Into Time Participants

Agency	***Character***	***Votes***
Clermont County Park District	Ralph the Diver	1136
Ohio Tobacco Museum	Captain Fredrick Kautz	818
Ripley Heritage	John and Jean Rankin	767
Kentucky Gateway Museum Center	Simon Kenton	376
Parker Society	John Parker	277
Friends of the Jennie Wade	Jennie Wade	217
Brown County Historical Society	John D. White	205
U.S. Grant Homestead Association	U.S. Grant	143
Bracken County Historical Society	General George Marshall	135
Adams County Historical Society	Cowboy Copas	90
Friends of the Jennie Wade	Captain John and Isabel McClain	90

Attention Scout and Youth Group Leaders!

Did you know the Clermont County Park District offers overnight camping in our Yurts?

We have two yurts available at Chilo Lock 34 Park for Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, American Heritage Girls, church youth camps, or any other organized civic minded youth group. Yurts are $50 per night and will comfortably sleep 20-25. The yurts come furnished with a wood burning stove.

To rent the yurts for your youth group please call Pattison Park at 513.732.2977.

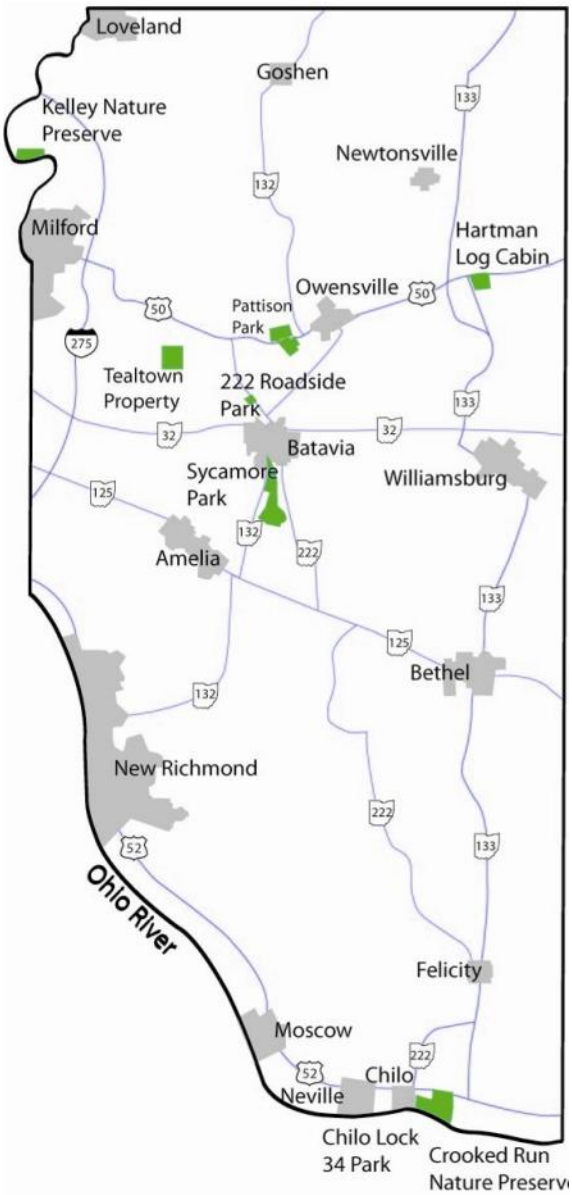
CHILO *Living and Working with the Ohio River*

Visit the Chilo Lock 34 Visitor Center and Museum
521 County Park Road Chilo, OH 45112

Winter Hours (December - February)
Friday - Sunday 12 pm to 5 pm

Special Thanks to the parents and girls of Girl Scout Troop #49197 and Sharon Pawlowski, Jerry West and Adam Hoople for Volunteering for the Habitat Help Day at Sycamore Park on Saturday November 14th.

Thanks to the dedicated hard working volunteers, we were able to remove a large amount of invasive honeysuckle. The improvement will allow for better views of the East Fork River, and will give our native wildflowers a better chance to survive next spring and summer.



Chilo Lock 34 Park (39 acres)
US Highway 52 Chilo, OH 45112 513.876.9013
Crooked Run Nature Preserve (77 acres)
US Highway 52 Chilo, OH 45112
Kelley Nature Preserve (42 acres)
297 Center St. Loveland, OH 45140
Pattison Park (45 acres)
2228 US Highway 50 Batavia, OH 45103 732.2977
Sycamore Park (53 acres)
4082 State Route 132 Batavia, OH 45103
Wilson Nature Preserve (105 acres)
4082 State Route 132 Batavia, OH 45103
Williamsburg to Batavia Hike Bike Trail (2.5 miles)
End of Broadway Road Williamsburg, OH 45176

Mission Statement

To acquire, plan, develop, program, and maintain park property in the county for residents and nonresidents alike. To secure the preservation of open space and places of scenic or historical value.

Board of Park Commissioners

William Stearns, *Chairman*
Kenneth Stewart
David Anspach

Chris Clingman, *Director*

Monthly board meetings are held the second Thursday of the month at 12:00 pm in Pattison Park Lodge. All meetings are open to the public. For more information call 513.732.2977.

Contact Information

Administrative Office
Pattison Park
2228 US Highway 50
Batavia, OH 45103
513.732.2977
parkdistrict@co.clermont.oh.us

Naturalist Office
Chilo Lock 34 Park
PO Box 106
Chilo, OH 45112
513.876.9013

Clermont County Park District