

WCPD Naturalist & Marketing Report February & March 2023



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Community Connections

- **Sent e-blasts** reaching 1,055 people. In the past 28 days, **Facebook posts** have reached 12,231 people
- **MailChimp**, the free service we have been using for e-blasts, is turning into a subscription only platform in March. The Friends of WCPD group has been investigating other options; the overall feeling is that communication about Park District events should be coming directly from the Park District through a Constant Contact (or similar) account. Until details can be sorted out, the Friends have agreed to purchase a subscription for \$24.21 per month which will accommodate the current email list.
- **Added Seasonal Job postings** to LinkedIn and Indeed and shared "Now Hiring" poster at in-person nature programs. Sent listings to Warren County Career Center, Otterbein Senior Living Community, and Kings High School to be shared with potential applicants.
- 2/16: **Coyotes in our Community** at Charles Lathram Senior Center (17 people attended)
- 2/17: EXCLUSIVE: **Beaks and Talons** - RAPTOR, Inc program for Friends, OCVNs and Master Gardeners (23 people attended)
- 2/18: **Great Backyard Bird Count** (17 people attended)
- 2/19: **Great Backyard Bird Count** (16 people attended)
- 2/19: Touched base with **Eagle Scout** candidate **Zach Marsden** to review his fishing filament recycling project at Armco Park. He has received council approval and can begin fundraising. Part of his project involves creating a sign to display at the boat house indicating what fish can be found in Armco Lake. When he has the general information together for that, I will be working with him to also create an 8.5x11 flyer with the same idea for anglers to take with them.



- 2/21: **Friends of WCPD** budget and event planning meeting via Zoom
- 2/24: Meetings with **Shannon Aquino** and **Larry** to review role of Friends group and how that may change with incoming CEO position
- 2/26: Released “**Harbinger of Spring**” **Species Spotlight**
- 3/7: Met with Friend of WCPD **Vicky Guelpa** to start sorting, identifying, and cataloging **fossils** that were donated to us for use in future programs
- 3/8: **Friends of WCPD** general meeting via Zoom
- 3/8: Networked with **Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists** at Cincinnati Nature Center “Coyotes in Our Cities” program with Dr. Stan Gehrt
- 3/8: Touched base with **Gold Project** candidate **Tori Schretter** about her Little Free Library project at Landen-Deerfield Park. Tori has started constructing the box and picked out paint colors and a design, which she will forward to me for approval before starting.
- 3/9: **Coyotes in our Community** program for Heritage at Miami Bluffs (63 people attended)
- **Fall Concert** planning is underway. After talking with the Friends, Larry, and Deerfield Township, we have decided to hold just two concerts spend more per band this fall in an effort to draw a bigger crowd. The bands were screened by the Friends and were chosen for their overall sound, general appeal, and an active social media presence with high numbers of followers. STICKTIGHT (country, southern rock, old time rock & roll) will perform on 9/16 and Flashback BAND (Classic Rock, Funk, Country, Pop) will perform on 9/30.
- **Cops & Bobbers Summer Kickoff** planning is underway. I’ve been in touch with our partners from last year and have laid out a tentative budget. **Dianna Kenneally**, Friends president, has applied for two \$500 grants to help fund the program. Whitetails Unlimited Caesar Creek Chapter’s fundraising banquet is in March, and they will make a donation towards the event as well. G3 Community Church, Ohio Division of Wildlife, Warren County Sheriff Office, Little Miami Conservancy, and Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District have already committed to helping,

Upcoming Events

- 3/11: Run for the Green at Landen-Deerfield Park
- 3/15: Commissioners’ Meeting
- 3/18: WCAS Star Party at Hisey Park
- 4/12: Suburban Wildlife Encounters in cooperation with Deerfield Township
- 4/18: Homeschool Program at Hisey Park
- 4/19: Backyard Wildlife in cooperation with Miami University Institute for Learning in Retirement
- 4/22: WCAS Star Party at Hisey Park

For a full list of upcoming events, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/WCPDNature2023>

Species Spotlight

Harbinger of Spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*)



Harbinger of Spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*) is one of the earliest blooming wildflowers in Ohio, often appearing in mid- to late-February. Another common name for this plant is "pepper and salt," an apt name as it reflects the flowers' contrasting dark anthers (pepper) and white petals (salt). Underground corms with fibrous roots store energy until late winter's dappled sunlight hits the forest floor, prompting the plant to start growing.

Harbinger of spring is a member of the *Apiaceae* family, as are carrots, parsley, hogweed, poison hemlock, and Queen Anne's lace; you may notice the likeness when comparing the lacy-looking leaves. Pepper and Salt's stout stems range in color from light green to reddish-brown and can grow up to a foot long, trailing under leaf litter, before flower buds appear just a few inches above ground.

The small flowers, each having five petals, appear in clusters called umbels at the end of the stem. A closer look at the flower structure reveals one to five flowers per cluster. When the oval petals first open, the the anthers may appear reddish in color but they turn black as the flower matures. The blooming period lasts around one month.

The nectar from the flowers attracts a variety of early pollinators like native bees and flies. Once pollinated, the flower produces a single seed per flower which naturally drops to the ground and helps the colony to spread.

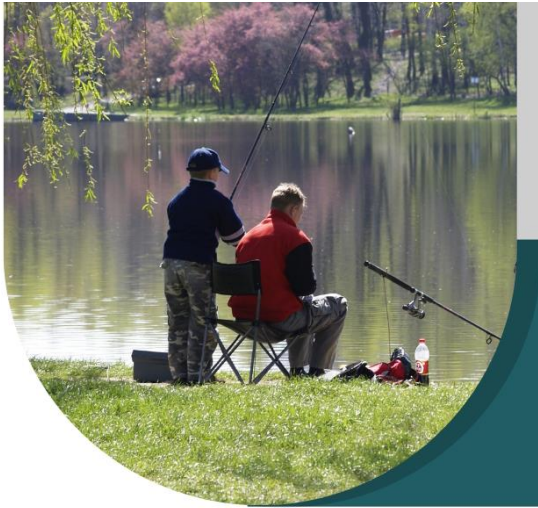
Look for it Now in Southwest Ohio

Harbinger of Spring can often be found in deciduous forests, popping up in loamy soils covered with a layer of nutrient-rich leaf litter.

Within the Warren County Park District, we have seen this plant growing at Landen Deerfield, Hisey, Armco, and Gulley Parks.

We have also seen it in our own yards, so help usher in spring by having a look around your own community!

Text by Shannon Pennington
Photos by Dave Woehr



COPS & BOBBERS SUMMER KICK-OFF

Sat., 6/3/23, 8am-noon

RAIN OR SHINE! WARREN COUNTY ARMCO PARK, 1223 SR 741, LEBANON, OH 45036

*Every child registered by
10am will win a special
prize at the noon drawing!*

| | |
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| 8am | Check-in begins at Jones Pavilion |
| 8:30am | Fishing derby begins, activities open |
| 11am | Fishing derby ends |
| 11am-noon | Stingray exhibit open |
| 11:30am | Lunch served |
| Noon | Noon: Winners announced & PRIZES distributed to ALL registrants present |

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

- Kick Off Summer with Local Heroes
- Free Bank Fishing for Kids 16 & Younger
- Free Archery & WC Sheriff Community Trailers
- Free Visits with Live Reptiles, Police K9, and Alpacas
- Free "Fishing Fun" Activity with WC Soil & Water
- Free Newport Aquarium Stingray Exhibit
- Free Hot Dog Lunch for Registered Participants

LOTS OF PRIZES

- Grab bags at registration for first 100 kids
- Grand prizes at noon for biggest bluegill, bass, catfish, & other species in each age group: 6 & under, 7-11, 12-16
- Additional BIG raffle prizes starting at noon: fishing poles, nets, tackle boxes, and more!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

DRAFT

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