

# WCPD Naturalist & Marketing Report

## August & September 2024



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### Community Connections

- In the past 28 days, **Facebook** posts have reached 14,977 people. **Weekly e-blasts** are reaching 2,794 (this includes the newly imported data from Civic Rec).
- 8/10: **Miller Park Butterfly Release** educational booth in partnership with Lebanon City Parks and Rec and Lebanon Garden Clubs. Several hundred community members attended. (SP)



- 8/10: **Night Glow Golf** and Foot Golf.
- 8/12: **Nature Education Team Meeting** with Matt Latham. (LA, SP)
- 8/12: **EVs Under the Stars** planning meeting via Zoom with Warren County Astronomical Society and Drive Electric Dayton (SP)
- 8/13: **Tech-Free Tuesday: Birds of Prey** with RAPTOR Inc at Landen-Deerfield Park. 97 kids, 46 adults, 4 volunteers = 147 attendees. (LA, SP)



- 8/13: **Hisey Fall Fest planning meeting** with Friends of Warren County Park District (SP)
- 8/14: Meeting with **Our Open Home, Arrow Adventure** and Matt (SP)
- 8/17: **Constellation Celebration** at **Hisey Park**. 20 adults, 5 kids, 1 volunteer = 26 participants. (LA, SP)
- 8/20: **Team Meeting** with Matt, Larry Easterly, Bryan Billhimer (SP)
- 8/21: **Toddler Trek: Spider Kids** at **Armco Park**. 12 kids, 9 adults = 21 participants. (LA)
- 8/21: **Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District** annual meeting and banquet with Matt (SP)

- 8/22: **All Staff Meeting** with all WCPD employees to discuss workplace culture and strategic plan, led by Matt and Human Nature (LA, SP)



- 8/22: **Walk-with-a-Doc** program brainstorm with City of Lebanon and OSU Extension. (SP)
- 8/23: Meeting with **Kathie Bowers** and **Cheryl Holly** from **Friends of WCPD** to go over supply inventory (SP)
- 8/24: **Volunteer project** to replace boards and remove honeysuckle at **Landen-Deerfield Park** with **CORA** and **Scout Troop 500**. 5 adults, 15 adults = 20 participants. (LA)
- 8/26: **Nature Education Team** meeting with Matt (LA, SP)
- 8/27: **Nature Lovers' Book Club: Nature's Best Hope** by Doug Tallamy, with **Laura Stanton** from **OSU Extension** at **Armco Park**. 5 participants (LA, SP)
- 8/28: **Introduction to Kayaking** with **WCSWCD** at **Armco Park**. 10 participants. (SP)
- 8/29: Meeting with Matt and **Haden Englert** to discuss grants and donations, including best practices (LA, SP)
- 9/1: **Environmental Education Council of Ohio** fall 2024 newsletter article about our **reptile ambassadors** and their role in community outreach and education. See attached. (SP)
- 9/2: Final day of **100-Hours-Outside** challenge. 142 children completed the challenge this summer! See attached flyer for list of names and prize donors. (SP)
- 9/3: Meeting with **Casey Burdick** from **City of Lebanon**, **Kathie**, **Larry**, and **Bryan** at **Armco Park** about forest management strategies and planning (SP)
- 9/5: **Toddler Trek: Beautiful Butterflies** at **Hisey Park**. 7 kids, 5 adults = 12 participants. (LA)
- 9/5: Zoom meeting with **Eagle Scout** candidate **SJ Smith**, troop 817 leader **Shawn Smith**, and **Matt Stierwalt** from **CORA** to discuss potential trail enhancement project at **Landen-Deerfield Park**. (SP)
- 9/6: Site visit at **Carmody Park** with **Martin Russell** to plan volunteer activity with son's hockey team. (SP)
- 9/9: **Nature Education Team** meeting with Matt (LA, SP)
- 9/11: **Friends of WCPD** meeting, inventory of supplies at **Hisey Park**, and planning for **Hisey Fall Fest**. (SP)



## Upcoming Events and Projects

- **Continuing projects:** Working with **Libraries** to throughout county. (LA)
  - All 5 county library systems have Nature Lover's Book Club Flyer for November 6<sup>th</sup> program
  - Goal is for a Winter, Spring, and Fall partner story time at each library
  - Winter story time partnerships- "The Mitten" by Jan Brett
    - 12/17 Family Story Time at Mason Public Library
    - 1/16 Preschool Story Time at Mary L. Cook Library
    - 1/8 and 1/9 (tentatively) at Franklin and Springboro Libraries
    - Reaching out to Lebanon and Salem Twp. Libraries about interest, to schedule dates
- 9/12: **Warren County Health and Wellness Fair** in Franklin (SP)
- 9/13: **Toddler Trek: Beautiful Butterflies** at **Landen-Deerfield Park** (LA)
- 9/13: **100-Hours-Outside Prize Pick-up** at **Landen-Deerfield Park** (SP)
- 9/14: Booth at **Deerfield Township Touch-a-Truck** event with our **ambassador reptiles**. (SP)
- 9/14: **100-Hours-Outside Prize Pick-up** at **Armco Park** (SP)
- 9/17: **Team Meeting** (SP)



- 9/17: Meeting with **Dawn Stutz** from **Our Open Home** and **Lindsey Leingang** from **Tonic True Nature** to discuss Maple Syrup program for winter. See attached draft flyer. (SP)
- 9/17: Live Animal Ambassador **Program** at **Franklin-Springboro Public Library** (LA)
- 9/21: **Carmody Park Clean Sweep** of the Great Miami River Watershed in coordination with **Butler and Warren County Soil and Water Conservation Districts**; volunteer honeysuckle removal project with **Martin's** team. (SP)
- 9/24: Meeting with **Niki Marengo** from **Arrow Adventure** and **Dawn Stutz** to discuss **"Chill, Grill, and Paddle"** event tentatively scheduled for June 2025. (SP)
- 9/24: **American Heritage Girls** program. (SP)
- 9/25: **Nature Education Team Meeting** (LA\*, SP) \*Lauren will be on maternity leave starting sometime near the end of September.
- 9/25: Park District **Strategic Plan Steering Committee Meeting**. (SP)
- 9/28: **EVs Under the Stars** at **Hisey Park**, presentation on **Armco Park Solar Pollinator Habitat** (SP)
- 10/1: **Team Meeting** (SP)
- 10/2: Meeting with **Congressman** and **Matt**. (SP)
- 10/5: **Friends of WCPD Hisey Fall Fest**, see attached flyer for details. (SP)
- 10/8: **Otterbein Senior Life Health and Wellness Fair** (SP)
- 10/9: **Nature Education Team Meeting** (SP)
- 10/12: **American Heritage Girls** program. (SP)

Take a walk. Visit a new park. Go camping. Read a book under a shady tree. Jump rope.

Warren County  
**PARK DISTRICT**  
Enjoy. Play. Preserve.

Warren County Park District Summer Challenge  
**#WCPD100HoursOutside**  
Memorial Day to Labor Day 2024

# CONGRATULATIONS!

Maxi A	Desmond D	Kendra H	Mae L	Danika R	Micah S
Weslyn A	Simon D	Owen H	Kaia M	Kamden R	Lyla S
Charlie A	Oakley E	Emily H	Sophia M	Hazel R	Jake S
Joey A	Lincoln E	Nick H	Brayden M	Tessa R	Adam T
Nora A	Luca E	Zach H	Cora M	Willa R	Colin T
Calliope B	Hadley F	Elena K	Evan M	Cara R	Sophia T
Jensen B	Lexey F	Addison K	Dawson M	Mila R	Bailey T
Ryleigh B	Charlotte F	Cecilia K	Travis M	Yago R	Tucker T
Andrew B	Piper F	Francesca K	Wade M	Oliver S	Aditya Ram V
Lucas B	Rosalind F	Violet K	August M	Ezra S	Harrison W
Matthew B	Evora F	Vivian K	Lichen M	Alice S	Sawyer W
Lincoln B	Miura F	Adalyn L	Ella M	Isaac S	Maggie W
Olivia B	Reventon F	Eden L	Levi M	Jayson S	Crosley W
Agnes B	Jacob F	Gianna L	Amelia N	Zephyr S	Ellis W
Samuel B	Jessica F	Maria L	Genevieve N	Claire S	Emma W
Aaron B	Juliana F	Olivia L	Nathaniel N	Isaac S	Grant W
Abigail B	Emily G	Thomas L	Theodore N	Luke S	Hadley W
James B	Hannah G	Adelina L	Hazel O	Cole S	Brooke W
Ripley C	Maya G	Meridith L	Sullivan O	Tate S	Landon W
Aliza C	Keira G	Milo L	Aakash P	Emma S	Gwyn W
Boaz C	Knox G	Theodore L	Aria P	Michael S	Liam W
Hazel C	Viaana G	Evan L	Reid P	Leah S	Lydia W
Braxton C	Albert H	Allan L	Davie P	Dylan S	Callum Z
Maggie C	Joseph H	Everlee L	Joanna P	Josie S	

**Congratulations to the 142 children who completed the challenge to spend at least one hundred hours outside this summer!**

Questions? Email [Shannon.Pennington@co.warren.oh.us](mailto:Shannon.Pennington@co.warren.oh.us) or text 513-833-7360

Go swimming. Eat breakfast outside. Have a campfire. Plant seeds. Go on a bug hunt. Play in the backyard.

Catch fireflies. Go fishing. Fly a kite. Trace your shadow. Go stargazing. Make s'mores. Dance in the rain.

Prizes have been provided by the following community supporters!



Warren County Park District  
100-Hours-Outside Challenge 2024



# Reptile Ambassadors and Their Role in Education

By Shannon Pennington, Warren County Park District Naturalist

Programs with our registered ambassador animals are one of my favorite things as an environmental educator. Working under an Ohio Department of Natural Resources education permit, “The Boys” are always a big draw at public events, and they provide a wonderful opportunity for us to chat with community members about some of Ohio’s native animals.

Warren County Park District adopted Stanley the gray rat snake and Noodle the eastern musk turtle after they were illegally taken out of the wild as youngsters and were later turned over to a state-permitted wildlife rehabilitator. Wildlife that has been kept as a pet cannot legally be released back into the wild for several reasons, including the threat of disease spread, inability of the animal to care for itself, and a lack of appropriate fear of humans and domestic pets.



*Noodle, eastern musk turtle, showing off his webbed feet at a youth fishing derby.*

WCPD’s woodland box turtles, Sheldon and Leonard, joined us through a different channel. Sheldon was the victim of a car accident and Leonard had an unfortunate run-in with a lawnmower. Wildlife rehabilitators helped them heal, but their permanent physical challenges prevent them from returning to their wild homes. They will live out their lives as ambassador animals instead. Box turtles can live to be around 100 years old, so they will still be “working” long after most of us have retired!

I am always amazed at the number of connections I can make with our native reptiles. With the younger children, we look for shapes and patterns on the turtles’ shells. Students who are learning about animal adaptations get to appreciate an in-person

view of how an aquatic turtle’s nose shape and long neck help it breathe air while staying hidden from predators, or how a rat snake’s patterned scales help it stay camouflaged. Even the most reluctant readers enjoy flipping through the Division of Wildlife’s Reptiles of Ohio Field Guide after meeting some real live examples. Stanley helps people understand that snakes serve an important role in the ecosystem, and that he’s not so scary once you get to know him. We incorporate lessons about native habitats and food sources, life cycles, brumation and aestivation, and what it means to be cold-blooded. We



*Leonard, woodland box turtle, helping kids practice observation skills.*

compare and contrast Noodle and Leonard, noticing how their feet give us clues about their preferred habitat. Older students learn about box turtles’ population decline, why it is happening, and what it means to be a state-listed “Species of Concern.” Sheldon, having only one eye as a result of his accident, even reminds children to practice kindness and compassion.

Stanley, Noodle, Sheldon, and Leonard are all unfortunate victims of human-caused issues, but their participation in our programming helps to educate thousands of community members every year so other wild animals may have a better chance of staying where they belong. “The Boys” truly are ambassadors!

If you are an Ohio educator, you may qualify to adopt an unreleasable native reptile for your own classroom or organization. Please visit <https://ohiodnr.gov/static/documents/wildlife/education/Animals%20in%20the%20Classroom%20pub009.pdf>



*Stanley, gray rat snake, at a WCPD reptile program.*



*Sheldon, woodland box turtle, helping kids find shapes and patterns*



# DRAFT 2.0

## Maple Syrup Series

Come join us to learn about TREES throughout the seasons. From tree identification, to tree tapping, to a community maple syrup boil, you're sure to learn some new things and have fun doing it!

### Sat., 10/5/24, 11am-4pm, General Information Table

- Visit our table during Hisey Fall Festival to learn about the art of tapping trees in southwest Ohio. Explore our newly marked tree trail and chat with Lindsey Leingang from *Tonic True Nature* about how to identify trees in your own yard so you can tap them this winter. Bonus: Visit with Dawn Stutz from *Our Open Home* and chat about glamping opportunities! FREE. No registration needed. **Hisey Park, 5443 Middletown Rd, Waynesville, OH**

### Sometime in November... DATE and TIME TBD, Winter Tree Identification Walk

- Yes, you can identify trees even after they have dropped their leaves! Join Naturalist Shannon and special guest Casey Burdick to check out the trees of Armco Park. Learn about the basics of winter tree identification, and take home the skills to identify and mark trees in your own yard so you can tap them this winter. FREE. Registration required. ODNR tree identification guides and tree-marking supplies will be provided for you to take home. **Armco Park, 1223 North State Route 741, Lebanon, OH**

### Sat., 1/25/25, TIME TBD, Tree Tapping Workshop & Glamping

- Lindsey Leingang of *Tonic True Nature* will demonstrate how to tap trees and will provide samples of tree water from different species. Participants who are interested in contributing to the spring community boil event can take home a spile and bucket for a small deposit to collect sap from their own trees. Participation in workshop is FREE. Registration required. **Armco Park, 1223 North State Route 741, Lebanon, OH.** Bonus: Exclusive glamping opportunity with *Our Open Home*. See XXXXX for details.

### TIME AND DATE TBD, Community Boil & Glamping

- Bring your buckets full of tree water and add them to our community boil. Participate in the art of maple syruping. FREE. No registration required. **Armco Park, 1223 North State Route 741, Lebanon, OH.** Exclusive glamping opportunity with *Our Open Home*. See XXXXX for details.

You may attend one, two, three, or ALL FOUR of the events!



## Register Here

[www.WarrenCountyParks.com](http://www.WarrenCountyParks.com)







### DATE

Wednesday,  
November 6, 2024

### TIME

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

### LOCATION

Armco Park  
Jones Pavilion  
1223 N State Route 741  
Lebanon, OH 45036

OHIO STATE  
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION  
WARREN COUNTY

[warren.osu.edu](http://warren.osu.edu)

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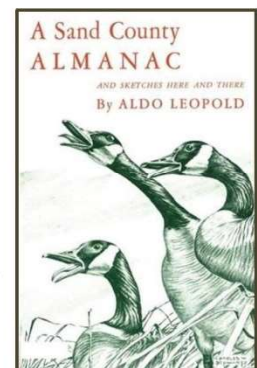
## Nature Lovers Book Club

Join OSU Extension educator, Laura Stanton, and Shannon Pennington, Warren County Park District naturalist, for the next Nature Lovers Book Club. This will be a casual and informal gathering, so there is no pressure to read the entire book. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with other nature lovers in our community and we look forward to hearing your thoughts and reflections.

In November, we will discuss *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold. Bring a friend, something warm to drink, and join us at the Jones Pavilion in Armco Park.

**Questions?** Please contact Laura at [stanton.60@osu.edu](mailto:stanton.60@osu.edu) or 513-695-1311.

For more information, visit:  
[go.osu.edu/nature-matters](http://go.osu.edu/nature-matters)



Warren County  
**PARK DISTRICT**  
Enjoy. Play. Preserve.

Ohio State University Extension is part of the  
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences at The Ohio State University.

# Clean Sweep of the Great Miami

**Saturday, September 21**

9 am—12 noon

## Carmody Park

7499 Martz Paulin Rd, Franklin Ohio

Great Miami River Cleanup is a fun, rewarding community beautification project for individuals, clubs, companies, schools, scouts, churches and other groups.

**Free T-shirt**

**Free bottled water**

**Register Online:**

[www.GreatMiamiRiverCleanUp.org](http://www.GreatMiamiRiverCleanUp.org)

**Or Contact:**

**Shannon Pennington**

**513-833-7360**

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**CLEAN SWEEP**

of the Great Miami River Watershed

Butler Co. Storm Water District

Warren Co. Soil &  
Water Conservation District

Warren Co. Park District

Butler Soil & Water  
Conservation District

Hamilton to New Baltimore  
Ground Water Consortium



# Hisey Fall Fest 2024

## Sat., Oct. 5, 11am-4pm

Opening Ceremony at 11am



### Celebrate Fall with Free, Family-Friendly, Outdoor Fun!



A special community event presented by  
Friends of Warren County Park District and  
YOUR Warren County Park District



- Pumpkin Picking (while supplies last)
- Pumpkin Decorating
- Warren County 4H Petting Zoo
- Live Reptiles
- Antique Farm Equipment Demos
- Wagon Rides (starting at noon)
- Warren County Astronomical Society
- Mary L. Cook Library
- Maple Syrup/Tree Tapping Info
- Bee Display from Warren Co. Beekeepers
- Civil War Reenactors
- Live Cannon Fire
- Food Truck
- Taxidermy Animals
- Tours of the Farmhouse
- Warren County 4H Archery Club
- Rocketry Club Demo
- Caesar Creek Soaring Club
- Our Open Home Glamping Demo
- Local Honey from Picky Bee Apiary

Scan to learn more  
about Friends of WCPD



[fwcpcdoh.org](http://fwcpcdoh.org)

**Hisey Park**  
5443 Middletown Rd.,  
Waynesville, OH 45068

Scan to learn more  
about WCPD



[WarrenCountyParks.com](http://WarrenCountyParks.com)

### Thank you to our generous community sponsors!

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