



The Co-Hiker

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Club News ...

Club Officers

<i>President</i>	John Troutman
<i>VP/Trail Master</i>	Connie Sheridan
<i>Secretary</i>	Linda Coe
<i>Treasurer</i>	Gerlinde Lott
<i>Membership</i>	Kate Graham
<i>Special Events</i>	Jeanne Barbee
<i>Historian</i>	Betty Bradley
<i>Social Events</i>	Carol Beal
<i>Webmaster</i>	John Troutman
<i>Co-Hiker Editor</i>	Jamie Abel

In Memoriam



Long-time member Mabel Varner of Brice, Ohio, has passed away. She has been a member since 1949 and is sixth on our all-time hiking list with 2495 miles.

Top 10 Hikers of 2017

Dick Barbee	163
Jamie Abel	142
Criss Molasso	139
Jeanne Barbee	132
Carol Beal	130
Jim Dearnell	129
John Troutman	118
Lisa Kuhn	117
Connie Sheridan	110

Club Statistics for 2017

COHC conducted 36 hikes (30 regular, 6 senior). A typical regular hike had 19 members, and a senior hike had 9. Three-quarters of our members attended at least one hike.

Recent Milestones

Dick Barbee	2,000 miles
Connie Sheridan	1,500 miles
Natalie Kupferberg	500 miles

The Hiker's Prayer

Thank you God for the rising sun.
You've granted me another day.
Your grace is amazing; bless you faithful Lord.
The creation sings your praise, and I join the sound.
Heal my tired soul; restore my aching bones.
Lead each step along my path today.
Ease my burdens as I press forward.
Quench my thirst with your living streams.
Like the cool morning breeze, your peace refreshes me.
Steady me on the slippery slopes.
Release me from the ropes that bind me, that hold me back.
Protect me from the viper that hides.
Lift me up from this shadowy valley.
The peak is almost in sight. I am rising above this world.
Into your country, I long to go.
Bless my companions who travel with me.
The trail is rugged and narrow, but you are right beside me.
Thank you God, my trusted Guide.
Glory to your holy name.
Amen.

This prayer by Scott Johnson is reproduced with permission. You may see his blog site at: <https://sscottjohnson.wordpress.com>

Hike Reports ...

Darby Creek



Darby Creek Metro Park

December 30, 2017

John Troutman, leader; Whaja Troutman, sweep

The streams at Darby Creek Metro Park are renowned for their water quality. Our small but fearless group of seven hikers started off by heading down a hill to the banks of Big Darby Creek. We followed it to the confluence of the Big and Little Darby Creeks, passing beneath bridges for Garner and Alkire Roads, as well as that for an 1850s railroad trestle. We hiked five miles over three gravel and grass trails within the park: Cobshell, Ancient and Terrace. Following the hike, we ate dinner at El Vaquero Restaurant in Hilliard, Ohio. 🍲



Downtown Lights

Downtown Christmas Lights

December 17, 2017

Ann Forrester, leader; Criss Molasso, sweep

This was one of the few hikes where we decided to eat dinner before the hike rather than the usual after-hike meal. The Spaghetti Warehouse was an ideal place to start for both an excellent meal and adequate parking. At 3:45, we were served our dinner promptly, and afterward, we

walked it off. It also was advantageous for those who wanted to only eat or hike. Sharon Thompson came for dinner, but could not hike. Diane Smith and son Ian Smith showed up to hike just as dinner was over. As the hike started Gerlinde Lott walked to the bridge and then to her car. Criss Molasso, our sweep, made sure she was safe.

The 15 remaining hikers continued on to State Auto Insurance Company on the north side of east Broad Street, where we walked around the beautiful Nativity displays for about 15 minutes. State Auto has had one of the more notable Christmas Nativity displays for many years. Next, we continued hiking to the Topiary Gardens where the trees were decorated with beautiful lights. Some of the lights I had never seen before. The same was true of our next stop at the Columbus Commons. Carol Beal encouraged us to see more displays in the area and after meeting some people she knew we were able to have them take a hiking club group photo. Again, timing is everything. Our next stop was to the west across High Street and on to Bicentennial Park. Lights were everywhere. The lights on the river steps were an unexpected beautiful display. It was restroom break time. After our break we continued across the bridge to COSI and back to the Spaghetti Warehouse parking lot.

It should be noted that after several days in the 20s, the temperature stayed around 40 degrees and it did not rain even though it looked like it might. This must have been due to the many hikers who brought their umbrellas. Thank you to those who were prepared. All in all, the dinner and the five-mile hike were very enjoyable. It was one of the most beautiful hikes we have been on, and it just makes you smile when you think about all of the stunning lighting displays. Submitted by: Tom Olander



Blacklick Woods Metro Park

Dec. 2, 2017

Jim Dearnell, leader; Carol Beal, sweep

Prior to our annual Christmas Party potluck lunch, 23 club members burned off the expected calories with a five-mile hike through Blacklick Woods Metro Park. Starting at the Beech-Maple Lodge, where we would later dine, we followed the Beech, Maple and Buttonbush Trails, as well as some of the Multipurpose Trail. We wound through a swamp forest with oak and white ash along with red maple, elm, shagbark, bitternut hickory and dogwood before returning to the lodge for merriment and food.





Alum Creek

Alum Creek State Park Bike Trail (P2)

November 18, 2017

John Troutman, leader; Dick Barbee, sweep

16 COHC club members turned out to hike the Central Ohio Mountain Bike Organization (COMBO) trail, Phase 2 (P2), the second of two mountain bike trails that were created within Alum Creek State Park. The 5.5-mile P2 trail is maintained by COMBO as a shared resource with the occasional hiker or trail runner and features a few longer bridges, a banked-wall turn and a signature section of elevated trail. The day of the hike was chilly and wet, with water running high in the creek that flows into the inlet from the lake. Following the hike, we warmed up and ate dinner at Smokey Bones Restaurant on Polaris Parkway. 🍲 🍷

Rocky Fork Metro Park (Sr. Hike)

November 11, 2017

Joe Schinner, leader

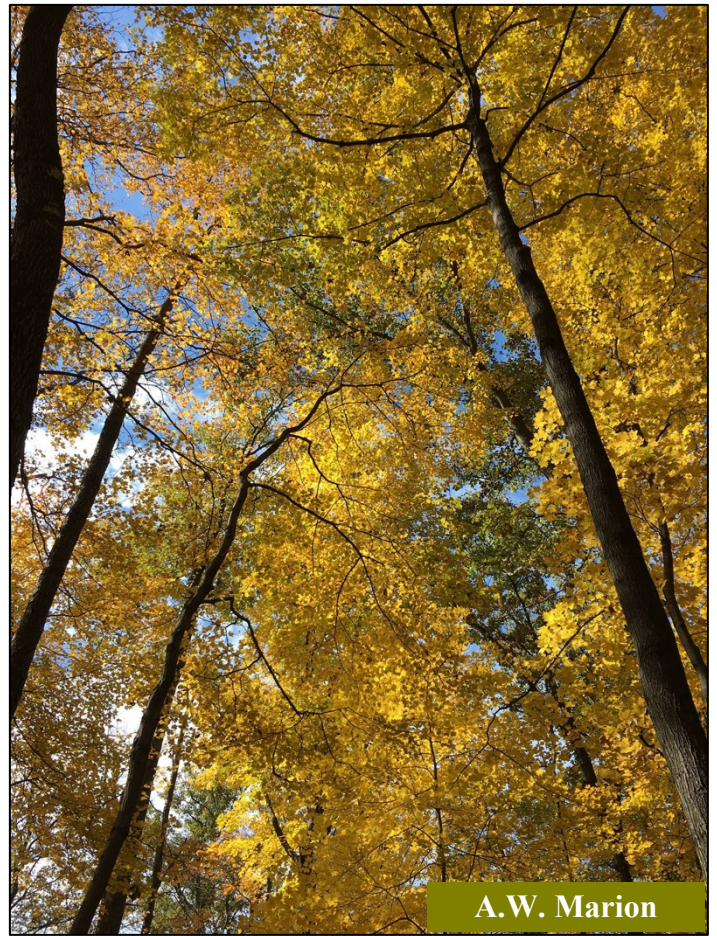
We started our nine-member, four-mile hike on the park's Millstone Connector Trail to reach the Beech Woodland Trail. This trail is on asphalt, but it let us see the large beech trees and some vernal pools. From there, we continued on to the North Meadow Trail, on grass, that passes over a small earthen dam, along a pond and past a restored native meadow. Afterward, we dined at the Bob Evans Restaurant in New Albany. 🍲 🍷

A.W. Marion State Park

November 4, 2017

Don Shaw, leader; Harry Jones, sweep

Another beautiful, warm and colorful day to be out in nature! We circled up and counted off as 18 in number. But phone calls were coming in to tell of late arrivals and by the time the hike was completed, there were 24 hikers



A.W. Marion

in total. Don Shaw took the hikers five miles clockwise around the lake, while Harry Jones swept up the late hikers. The water was at full level this year, so the stream crossings were high and assistance across them was provided. No mishaps! This area is nicknamed "Devils Backbone" and provides some steep angles to clamber up and down. We saw one mountain biker tackling some of the new trails there. The view across the lake from the dam was a sight to behold, with the vibrant colors of sky and trees reflecting on the water. We took some group pictures and then headed off to Goodman's Family Restaurant in Circleville for nourishment and social time. 🍲 🍷



Griggs & Scioto



Griggs & Scioto

Griggs Dam & Scioto River

October 28, 2017

Carol Beal, leader; Jim Dearnell, sweep

What a new and interesting experience we shared hiking along the Scioto on a cold rainy Saturday! Unbeknownst to us a massive rowing regatta was happening on the Scioto River the same day as our five-mile hike. After finding parking and regrouping, we enjoyed watching the narrow crew boats in and out of the river, being carried and racing down the marked courses. The crowds and revelry added to our day of hiking by the water, which also took our group of 17 down river to the reservoir dam and up onto an outdoor amphitheater stage. A good meal awaited us El Vaquero. So long until our next adventure. 🌲🍂

Boch Hollow State Nature Preserve

Oct. 7, 2017

Jamie Abel, leader; Jim Dearnell, sweep



Boch Hollow

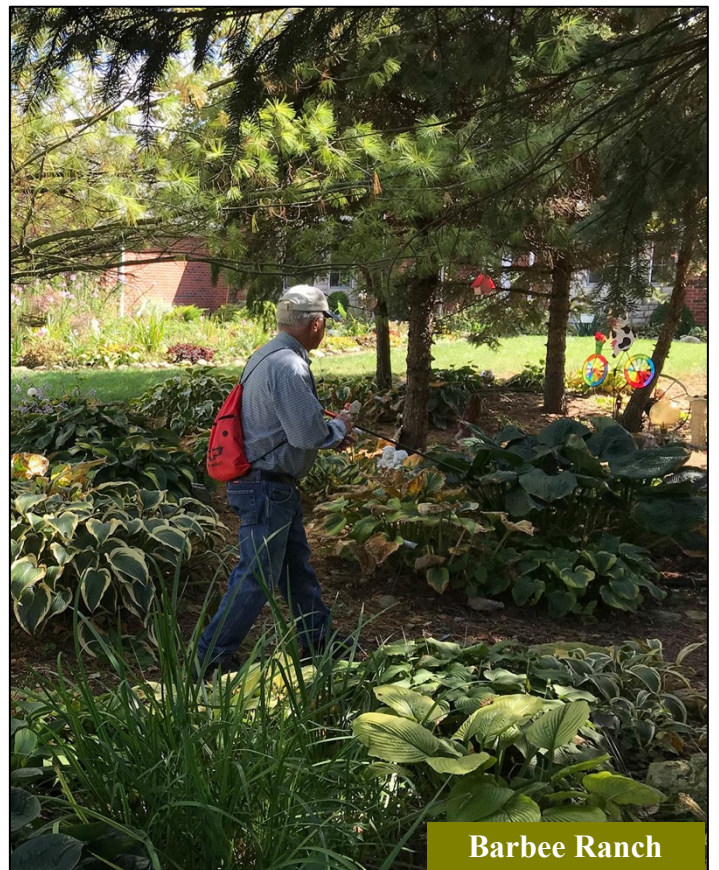
Meeting at noon, a handful of hikers carpooled a short way up the road, where they walked down a ravine to eat lunch while feasting their eyes on picturesque Robinson Falls. Returning to the West Trailhead, we met with the rest of the hikers and 15 intrepid souls headed into the woods on an unusually sweltering October afternoon. A mile into the hike, two hikers turned around after one of them succumbed to heat and the lingering effects of a recent illness. The rest of the hiking party traveled 4.5 miles on a fairly new section of the Buckeye Trail. We traveled across five hills through several habitats, including riparian corridors, ridges, old field remnants, and mature wooded hills with hemlocks, beeches, sourwoods and oaks. As this was a straight-thru hike, a few cars were pre-positioned at the East Trailhead to bring hikers back to their cars after the hike. Following the hike, we met at The Olde Dutch Restaurant in Logan for dinner and conversation.

Barbee Hosta Ranch

September 30, 2017

Dick Barbee, leader; Jeanne Barbee, sweep

We began the hike walking past the Hostas in their new pergola, moved on to the tall blue spruce trees out front and hiked down the hill to the far corner. Dick told us about the diplodia tip blight that has killed many of our



Barbee Ranch

scotch pine trees. We passed by a few small paw paw trees and continued into the white pine tree section (These trees were all planted by the Barbee family when the children were teens to sell as Christmas trees). Next, we headed up the hill into the winding hay-field paths. Carol Beal picked up some Honey Locust pods, which she later used for decorations at the Christmas party.

Continuing back toward Plum Run, we crossed the stream where it was dry. Then, we headed into the wooded area, following the mowed paths. Dick pointed out how we battle the Honey Suckle's aggressive attempts to take over the woods. We went on through the Maple Tree section and up to the Buckeye Tree section. (Squirrels had gotten most buckeyes). Following the trail on the outside perimeter, we chased up two deer. Finally, our group of 25 came back across Plum Run and through the white pines and Red Bud trees to the house, completing the five-mile circuit. 🌿🌿



turning onto the path that leads to Erie Canal Lock 16. We then passed through the Interurban Tunnel and marched on to Council Rock. We then scaled the hill alongside the waterfall, where we traversed the shaded woods and followed the ravines by way of the Marie Hickey and Oak Knob loop trails. We witnessed an increasingly rare sight as we heard and watched a train crew performing ballast maintenance, depositing large loads of fresh rock on the railbeds. Following the hike, we met nearby at Stacey's Homestyle Buffet in Heath for a satisfying dinner and warm conversation. 🌿🌿

Social Reports ...

Christmas Party

December 2, 2017

Carol Beal, coordinator

This year we returned to the rustic Beech-Maple Lodge at Blacklick Metro Park for our Christmas celebration. The tables were covered in brown paper and decorated with pine boughs, cones and nuts found in the woods. Everyone received sugar cookies as a take home treat. Our traditional ham dinner was accompanied by many delicious homemade dishes from members kitchens. All in all, it was a day well spent hiking, eating, singing and enjoying one another's company. 🌿🌿

Fall Camp—Mohican State Park

October 14, 2017

Dick and Jeanne Barbee, coordinators

Camp McPherson welcomed 20 campers back for our fall camp with the beauty of nature around us and a great hotel-like set up with our own camp site for hot dogs on Friday. (Thanks to all who brought supplies especially



Blackhand Gorge State Nature Preserve

September 9, 2017

Harry Sanger, leader; Margareth Sanger, sweep

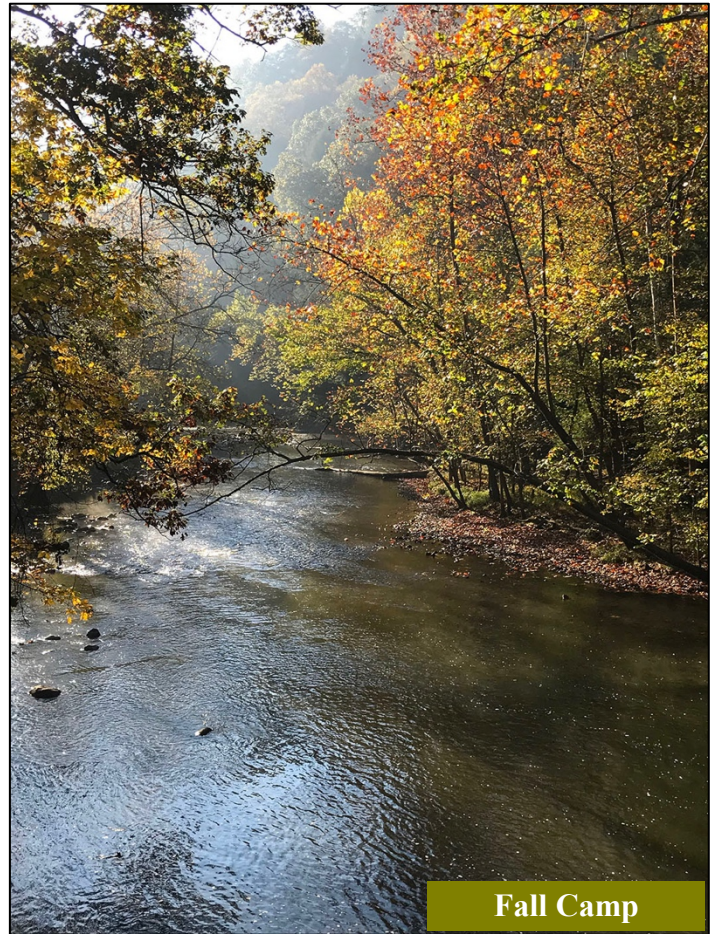
A healthy turnout of 24 hikers began this six-mile hike by crossing over to the far side of the Licking River and

Carol, Jim and others who collected kindling to start it.) Our traditional three-mile night road hike led by Dick was a beautiful star-studded night—a little cold as 19 of us wandered down Shadley Valley Road in the darkness.

Fall Camp



Back at the camp, we found we'd eaten so much at our cookout (s'mores) that we didn't hit the snack table very hard. Of course, the puzzles were out, and the race was on as to which group would finish first. The cat lovers (Cathy Young, Sharon, Carol, Tammy, etc.) had a smaller puzzle. Then, all joined in on Betty Bradley's larger, harder puzzle. (They actually started on a third puzzle later at camp.) This was Sherry Hay and Martha Brown's first camping event. They seemed to enjoy it.



Fall Camp



Fall Camp

The next morning, all were up and eating over at the Camp Kitchen and enjoyed selecting what they wanted in sandwich fixin's, snacks and drinks for the hike. We made sure the right sandwiches were all in the cars for our lunch. Hike leaders Jamie and Lisa met 22 additional hikers at the Covered Bridge. Jamie led a good seven-mile hike, the weather cooperated and we all made it to the fire tower where the cars were parked for lunch. Those doing the longer hike then continued the trek, while shorter-distance hikers, having completed four miles, headed out for other activities. The fun continued back at camp. Jeanne and Dick cleaned up and dressed for a grandson's wedding back in Columbus. They returned by evening, but weren't recognized in their fancy clothes. The puzzles and story telling continued. Sunday came early and breakfast was enjoyed immensely, as we'd all been active! Dick and



Fall Camp



Fall Camp

Jeanne led 18 hikers on Sunday's four-mile trip to Lyons Falls, where excellent picture-taking opportunities abounded. The weather was great because Jeanne brought an umbrella, which only got used by Carol Beal under the waterfall (drips). Both Tom Orlander and Bob Brown took spells in being locked up at the "misbehavior" stand. All cleaned up their rooms and headed back home until next year, when we hope to return.

Barbee Hosta Ranch Cookout & Hayride

September 30, 2017

Dick and Jeanne Barbee, coordinators

After getting back from trekking through the woods, the hikers and non-hikers loaded up onto two hay wagons to take a ride the easy way over the field. Some wanted to continue, but others wanted to go back for food, so the



Barbee Cookout

wagons returned back to where Dick and Jeanne's grandson Josh was cooking the hamburgers and hot dogs. A whole bunch of good food was brought to the home, and some folks were even able to cook some s'mores on the fire to add to their intake after all that. A special 'Thanks' goes out to Sherry Hay, who came early to help us get stuff ready. Looking forward to next year's event.



Barbee Hayride

Preventing trailhead parking break-ins

One of the worst ways to end a beautiful day with nature is to find that your vehicle has been vandalized. A walk back to your vehicle should feel like a victory lap, not one of the worst days ever. Unfortunately, creeps aren't only found in populated areas. When some unscrupulous people feel they are alone they will vandalize and steal without remorse.

So, to keep your tires from getting slashed or windows bashed in follow these steps. Most of them are common sense, but when you are getting ready to enjoy yourself and your mind is on the trail it's easy to forget the things that we leave behind. Follow these tips to prevent parking break-ins to make sure you have a car when you come off the trail and to have one with everything within it where you left it and in-tact.

■ Nature causes changes

1. **Empty out your car:** My parents came from New York, so I grew up with them telling me to keep everything in the car hidden. Don't leave my Walkman on the seat (yes, I am old) or someone will bash the window in for it. They would also tell me never to leave change where someone could see it. They were right; thieves will take the smallest things just because they can. Keep anything that you leave in the car inside the trunk. Don't leave water, blankets, clothing, food in view inside your car.
2. **Clean out the car before you get there:** Make sure you stash your stuff that you will leave in your trunk before you get to the trailhead. If others are in the lot or spot something you leave in your trunk, they may take it. Professional thieves may be casing out the lot just waiting for you to display your inventory. All they have to do is wait a while, and once you're gone, they can help themselves to your hard-earned items.
3. **Unscrew the door lock button:** If you have the old-style door knobs, unscrew them. It really only takes a couple of minutes and six inches of cord to open a door that has these old door knobs. A pro can easily make hundreds of dollars off of the mistake of leaving the door lock buttons on parked cars. You can even buy anti-theft ones, but I just unscrew mine.
4. **Don't show off:** I would never take my Sunday driver to the trailhead. I take my old truck just because I am more likely to have someone leave me a few bucks under the wiper blade than I would have them key my nice new car. Some people will damage your nice-looking car just because they are jealous. If you only have the one nice car, borrow your dad's beater.



5. **Research Break-ins:** Look for news of any break-ins in the area. Many times you can find out from fellow hikers, area newspapers, local police or even ask at local businesses. Generally, break-ins will happen often in an area, and then you can avoid that particular trailhead. When you get there also do a little scouting for signs of break-ins, (broken glass, items thrown about) and follow your gut instinct. If I see a bunch of vehicles at the trailhead I also will grab my video camera and videotape all the vehicles and plate numbers just in case the authorities may need them later.



6. **Park Smart:** Don't just park in any spot at the trailhead. Parking at the end of the lot may give criminals more privacy to steal from you or damage your vehicle. Find the spot with the least amount of privacy and no blind spots. The more people who pass your vehicle means less time that criminals have access to your ride.

Keeping your ride home safe should be just as important as prepping for your hike. Following these simple steps will make things harder for criminals and vandals. Also learning to trust your instincts will go a long way toward making your hike and ride home happy and safe. 🍷 🍷

This article was edited here for space. It was written for the Montem Outdoor Gear website and appeared online at: <https://montemlife.com/preventing-trailhead-parking-break-ins/>.

Prevent mosquito bites while hiking

Have a better time on your next outing!

Mosquitos are familiar foes for outdoor enthusiasts of all types. Whether your adventures involve hiking, cycling, camping or kayaking, you've surely spent a night or two swatting at these buzzing pests and coating yourself with itch-relieving creams.

But while many consider mosquitos a fact of outdoor life, you don't have to let them ruin your trip. In fact, there are a number of things you can do to keep these infuriating insects at bay and reduce the number of welts covering your body.

■ Know your enemy: Basic mosquito facts

Although most people think of mosquitos as a single entity, scientists have identified about 3,000 species worldwide. But don't panic; only a handful of these seem to enjoy feasting on human blood and cause serious problems for people.

Anopheles—Active from dusk to dawn, Anopheles mosquitos are capable of transmitting the malaria parasite. Anopheles mosquitos are most common in the tropics.

Culex—Culex mosquitos are found worldwide. They can transmit a number of diseases, such as West Nile Virus and Japanese encephalitis, among others.

Aedes—Formerly found in the tropics, Aedes mosquitos are now world-wide. Aedes can transmit filariasis (elephantiasis), yellow fever, Dengue fever and Zika.

Although there is some variation between species, most mosquitos exhibit a relatively similar lifecycle. Adult females produce eggs after feeding on the blood of another animal. The young larvae hatch and eventually pupate, before becoming adults soon thereafter.

■ Finding food: How do mosquitos find you?

Mosquitos often appear to have a supernatural ability to find people. Some of the primary ways by which mosquitos locate you include:

Bacteria on your skin—The human body is covered in billions of bacteria, and many mosquito species can "smell" the waste products they excrete. Bacterial ecosystems vary slightly from one person to the next—one species common on your skin, while a different species coats your hiking partner. These differences cause some people to be more attractive to mosquitos than others.

Your chemical compounds—Your own body produces The bacteria living on your body aren't the only source of mosquito-attracting odors. Mosquitos can also track you via the chemical compounds your own body produces.



Body Heat and Movements—Mosquitos also use their vision and thermal sensitivity to find people. Their eyes are most acutely sensitive to movement, which means those who move around more are more likely to be bitten. Mosquitos are also able to detect body heat; those with a higher body temperature are at increased risk of getting bit.

■ Use repellants to keep mosquitos away

Now that you understand a little more about mosquitos and the ways by which they locate you, it is time to turn your attention to prevention. This essentially means embracing some or all of the following strategies:

Conventional repellent—Conventional mosquito repellents are a good first-line strategy you can employ to prevent bites. Most conventional repellents work by cloaking the chemicals typically emitted by your body.

There are four primary active ingredients used in various repellents. They include: DEET (a time-tested and highly effective mosquito repellent), IR-3535 (one of the newer active ingredients that has been used in Europe for many years) Picaridin (will not irritate your skin or damage plastics) and Permethrin (too harsh for human skin; should be applied to your clothing and boots).

All-Natural Solutions—Despite claims to the contrary, the active ingredients in most repellents have been proved to be quite safe. However, some outdoor enthusiasts are more interested in naturally occurring mosquito repellents. Some of the most popular natural repellents include: Citronella (a popular mosquito-repelling substance derived from grasses), Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (a synthetic version of an ingredient found in eucalyptus leaves) and Catnip Oil (catnip contains an essential oil called Nepetalactone). *(continued on next page)*

■ Use clothing to shield your skin

While mosquitos can occasionally penetrate light-weight clothing with their needle-like mouths, clothing with any thickness at all will generally protect you from their probing proboscises. To enjoy the most protection possible:

Wear long sleeves and long pants—Simply covering your skin will help you avoid many bites, so be sure to wear long sleeves and long pants when battling blood-sucking bugs. Just be sure to select lightweight clothing, so you can still remain cool in the summer heat.

Light-weight and loose outer layer—A loose outer layer of clothing (such as a windbreaker) will help prevent the mosquitos from biting through your clothes and still help to keep your body temperature low, which will provide further protection from the insects.

A bandana to shield your neck—Mosquitos are often attracted to your neck and the area behind your ears, so consider covering these areas with a lightweight bandana or kerchief. This will help reduce the number of volatile compounds emerging from your skin and provide a bit of a protective barrier.

Light-colored clothing—Light colors, including everything from white to khaki to yellow, tend to repel mosquitos and other insects, while dark colors often attract them. Light colors will also keep your body temperature lower, which will offer further protection.

Treat your clothing with permethrin—Permethrin-based clothing treatments are available in most outdoor and sporting goods stores, and they can help reduce the number of insects buzzing around your body all day long. Most permethrin treatments will last for a week or two, which means you won't have to reapply the repellent very often.



■ Avoid mosquito-friendly locations

You can't completely avoid mosquitos, as they travel far and wide in an attempt to secure food. However, you can certainly avoid the majority of the bugs by avoiding places where they tend to congregate.

This essentially means you'll want to:

Avoid damp, low-lying places—Mosquitoes typically congregate around stagnant water bodies and wetlands to mate and deposit their eggs.

Hike along wind-swept cliffs and ridges—Mosquitos try as best they can to avoid winds, as they get blown around pretty easily.

Stay away from the shade—Mosquitos can desiccate and overheat if they hang out in the sun for too long, so they tend to stick to shady places as much as possible.

■ When all else fails, use a mosquito net

Although they are of little use while you are moving, mosquito nets are the gold-standard for bite prevention. Lightweight, affordable and easy to use, mosquito nets should be considered mandatory equipment for any hikers who are traveling through mosquito-infested lands.

Mosquito nets allow breezes to penetrate, yet the holes in the net are small enough to prevent mosquitos from passing through. However, mosquitos can bite through these nets, so always avoid wrapping them tightly around your skin. Instead, set them up like a secondary tent.

Mosquitos are certainly infuriating, and they can make you miserable while you are trying to get some rest and relaxation in the natural world. However, by embracing the tips and suggestions listed above, you'll surely avoid many bites and have a better time on your next hike. 🦋🦋

This article was heavily edited here for space. It was written for the Montem Outdoor Gear website and appeared online at: <https://montemlife.com/how-to-prevent-mosquito-bites-while-hiking/>. Mosquito photo by Alvesgaspar - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=311248>

