



# Summer E– Newsletter June—August 2010

## TOADS IN YOUR BACKYARD

**Laura Hoople, Naturalist**

Finding a toad in the backyard is always an exciting experience. It often brings out a yelp and a jump, followed by a hasty scramble to grab the fast moving creature. After the initial surprise wears off, then comes the list of questions: what kind of toad is it, what's it doing here, and most importantly, will it give me warts? Well, take a close look at the animal, have no worries about warts and consider yourself one lucky person for finding such a unique, often shy, amphibian. Take a minute to get familiar with your new backyard friend and keep these fun toad facts in mind.



Clermont County is home to two species of toads: the American toad and the Fowler's toad. Though quite similar, a few simple details will help you figure out which toad is hanging out at your home. First take a look at the habitat you are in. Fowler's toads prefer to live in areas with sandy soils, especially around the shores of lakes and in river valleys. They can also be found in sandy meadows and prairies and in open woodlands. American toads do not prefer a specific soil type; they range from the deep forest to open meadows to suburban backyards.

If you were lucky enough to hear the toad singing at some point, identifying the species will be easy. American toads have a long musical trill lasting up to thirty seconds that is quite pleasant to hear. Fowler's toads have a short, unmusical beat that some describe as sounding like a sheep.

The best and usually easiest way to tell the toads apart requires a close up look- the dark spots along a toad's back hold the secret to identification. American toads have one, two or three warts in each dark spot. Fowler's toads have three or more warts in each of the dark spots. Many Fowler's toads will often have a single dark spot on the chest; American toads typically have dark spotting across the chest and belly.

Occasionally, you may find a toad with a combination of these characteristics. Fowler's and American toads have been known to interbreed and their offspring can have the looks of either or both toad species so you may have a particularly unique creature in your hand.

No matter which species you have found, a toad is good addition to any backyard, especially to anyone with a garden. A single toad is estimated to eat around 10,000 insects in a three month period, making them a no cost, chemical-free, natural pest control! Food choices include slugs, snails, earthworms, sowbugs, moths, other insects and a variety of larvae. Even if the thought of meeting a toad makes you squeamish, their nocturnal habits mean you will get the insect controlling benefits without too many face to face meetings.

*(continued on page 3)*

**Park District News**  
**Chris Clingman, Director**

As the Park District marks its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, several improvements and additions to the Park District are planned to take place this summer.

Aletheia Pattison donated the Pattison Lodge in the late 1970s and it became the scene of numerous family reunions, meetings, and weddings. In the early 1990s the lodge was remodeled and a wedding setting with a gazebo was added. Since then over 1500 weddings have taken place at the lodge. In the last 10 years the lodge has received a new roof and windows. Last year the landscaping at the gazebo was renovated. This year the heating and cooling system are being replaced. The new system is more energy efficient and will lower the utility cost for the lodge.

A new pedestrian access to the boat docks at Chilo Lock 34 Park will be added this summer, along with an additional 100 feet of courtesy docks. These access improvements for Ohio River boaters are being made through a grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft.

Four parcels of land are being added to the Park District along the East Fork of the Little Miami River. These parcels are part of an effort by the East Fork Watershed Collaborative to protect and improve the water quality of the East Fork. The Collaborative is made up of local governments and agencies in the East Fork watershed. They put together watershed action plans to help the East Fork and its tributaries meet water quality standards established by The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The parcels were purchased with grants from Ohio EPA's Water Resource Restoration Sponsorship Program (WRRSP). The grant was sponsored by the Clermont County Sewer District, who received a lower interest rate on a loan to make sewer system improvements for sponsoring the grant.

The weather finally gave us break at the new park on Tealtown Road in Union Township. Last fall wet weather prevented us from paving the parking lot, which meant the site was inaccessible all winter. A dry April enabled crews to get in and pave the parking lot. With the parking lot finished we can now start work on the initial trails and have people walking in the park later this summer. This first phase of the park was funded through a partnership with Union Township and funds from the ODOT MetroParks Road Fund. Restrooms, a playground, and a picnic shelter will be added as additional funding is secured.



*Parking lot at the Tealtown Road property*

July is National Parks and Recreation month. Be sure to get out and enjoy your parks this summer! Look for a video highlighting the 40 year history of the Park District on public access television stations throughout the month.



## Toads in Your Backyard (continued)

Attracting toads to your yard takes only a few simple steps. They need a patch of bare soil for burrowing during the hottest and coldest parts of the year, a ready supply of insects, and access to water. Flower gardens or vegetable beds are perfect for burrowing, especially in shady areas. A chemical free yard is best for a healthy supply of insects and water can be as simple as a shallow dish placed on the ground or as elaborate as a landscaped pond. Upside down, partially buried flower pots also make excellent hiding places.

Just remember that although you have no intention of harming the toad in your hand, they have no idea. To a toad, you are a big scary predator who wants to eat them. Their first reaction is to let loose a flow of urine (it is actually mostly water that was absorbed through the skin) to encourage you to turn them loose. This will NOT give you warts! A toad's second defense are the warts covering its body. Each wart, and especially the large parotid glands behind the eyes, are filled with a poison that burns the mouth tissues of other animals. Simply touching the toad will not cause any harm to you since the warts would need to be open. A quick hand washing after releasing a toad will prevent any potential negative reactions.



After you have finished your toad investigation and identification, find a safe shady spot to release it. In the future, keep your eyes open for your now familiar friend and enjoy knowing such a creature calls your yard home.

If you want to attract toads to your yard join us on Wednesday, August 4th at 6:30 pm at Pattison Park and you can build your own Toad Abode (more details on page 5).

## Special Thanks . . .

To the East Fork Bass Anglers for sponsoring the Matt Maupin Memorial Kids Fishing Tournament at Pattison Park on Saturday May 8th. The Bass Anglers solicit many wonderful donations for prize giveaways at the annual event. [Click here for pictures of the event.](#)

To the following for volunteering their time at the Pancakes in the Park event on Saturday March 10th at Pattison Park: Laura Noe, Dave Anspach, Ken Stewart, Rick Johnson, Grassy Run Historical Arts Committee. [Click here for pictures of the event.](#)

To Anita and Jonah Karschnick and Adam Hoople for volunteering their time to remove invasive garlic mustard at Crooked Run Nature Preserve and Sycamore Park in April.

To the Georgetown Middle School sixth grade Movers and Shakers club for volunteering their time to remove garlic mustard at Crooked Run Nature Preserve on Saturday April 17th.

To Jerrod Young, Spencer Taylor, Kara White, and Sabrina Parker of Georgetown Middle School for volunteering for a third consecutive year during the garlic mustard pull at Crooked Run Nature Preserve.



*Over 40 volunteers showed up at Crooked Run Nature Preserve to remove invasive garlic mustard on April 17th.*

# Spring Naturalist Programs

## June—August



Program has a fee



Pre-registration is required

### **Slimy or Scaly?** **Thursday June 17** **6:30 pm** **Pattison Park**

Join the naturalist to explore the differences between reptiles and amphibians. We'll have several live reptiles and amphibians on display for you to get an up close look at some of our local wild residents. Meet at the picnic shelter.

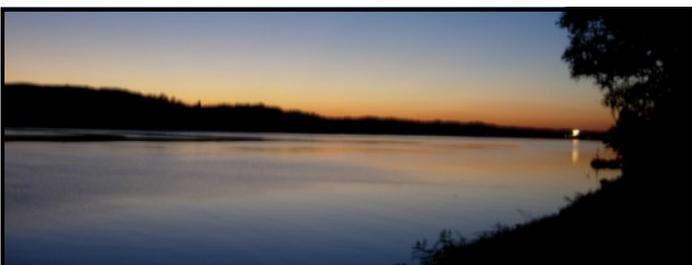


### **Ohio River Sweep** **Saturday June 19** **9:00 am - 12:00 pm** **Chilo Lock 34 Park**

Join thousands of volunteers along the 981 mile long Ohio River for the annual clean up. We'll be cleaning up and removing trash from the shoreline at Chilo Lock 34 Park and Crooked Run Nature Preserve. Please call 513.876.9013 to register. For more information on other clean up locations within Clermont County, please call Clermont 20/20 at 753-9222.



*Photo courtesy: ORSANCO*



### **Preschool Storytime**

Wednesday June 16th 1:30 pm *Toads*  
Wednesday July 21st 1:30 pm *Bees*  
Wednesday August 18th 1:30 pm *Butterflies*  
**Sycamore Park**

*All Preschool Story Times will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1:30, unless otherwise noted.*

Bring your preschooler for a special program in the park. Enjoy stories, crafts and hikes with the naturalist. Each month is a new topic.



### **Summer Evening Walk** **Wednesday June 23, 6:30 pm** **Sycamore Park &** **Wilson Nature Preserve**

Enjoy the start of summer by taking a leisurely stroll along the river. We will follow the trail into Wilson Nature Preserve and use all of our senses to explore the evening. Meet at the bridge.



**Kids Crafts: Tree ID Guide**



**Thursday July 8**  
**11:00 am**  
**Pattison Park**

The Clermont County Parks are home to dozens of varieties of tree species. Gather leaves and create your own field guide to make identifying them as easy as can be.

**Preregistration is required.**  
Program requires a fee of \$2.00 per child.  
Call 513-876-9013 to sign up.



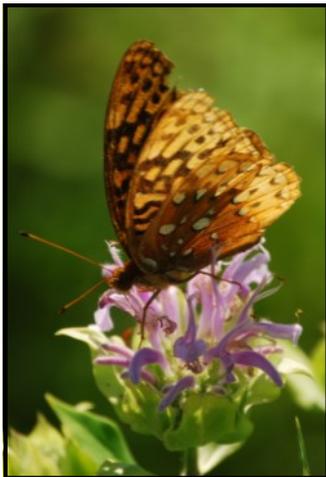
**Kids Crafts: Toad Abodes**



**Wednesday August 4**  
**6:30 pm**  
**Pattison Park**

Learn all about the toads in your own backyard and create a cozy shelter to encourage them to stick around. Meet a live toad and search the park to find some in the wild. **Preregistration is required.**

Program contains a fee of \$4.00 per child. Please call 513-876-9013 to sign up.



**Butterfly Walk**  
**Saturday July 10th**  
**1:00 pm**  
**Chilo Lock 34 Park**  
*Meet at the visitor center*  
**Saturday July 17th**  
**1:00 pm**  
**Kelley Nature Preserve**  
*Meet at the information kiosk*

Tour the meadows of Chilo

Lock 34 Park and Kelley Nature Preserve on a quest to find butterflies and summer wildflowers. Bring your own butterfly net if you have one and get ready to run!

**Beavers**  
**Sunday July 18**  
**1:00 pm**  
**Crooked Run Nature Preserve**



Beavers are one of our most unique mammals, but believe it or not they were once completely gone from Ohio. Discover how these animals have made an amazing comeback and are now abundant in our area. We'll hike through the nature preserve in search of these secretive animals. Meet at the visitor center.

**What's in the Water?**  
**Saturday August 7**  
**11:00 am**

**Sycamore Park**

Jump feet first into the East Fork of the Little Miami! We'll use kick nets and spread out in the river to see what creatures are hiding below the surface. Closed toe shoes recommended. Children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult. Meet at the information kiosk.



## Island Exploration Hike

Sunday August 15

1:00 pm

### Sycamore Park

Did you know the Clermont County Park District owns its own island? The 25 acre island is part of the James and Frances



Wilson Nature Preserve. If the river conditions cooperate, we'll ford the river and explore the large island to see what's blooming and what lives there. Note: If the river is too high, or moving too fast, we'll stay on the trails rather than trying to cross the river. Meet at the bridge.

# Explore the OUTDOORS

The Clermont County Park District is once again participating in the Explore the Outdoors program sponsored by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Visit Sycamore Park, Chilo Lock 34 Park, or Pattison Park to complete some of the activities and find your secret code. Activity books can be downloaded online at

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

or can be picked up at the Chilo Lock 34 Visitor Center (while supplies last).



If you would like to help your child participate in the Explore the Outdoors program, sign up online at [www.exploretheoutdoorsohio.com](http://www.exploretheoutdoorsohio.com)

## Basic Nature Photography

Thursday August 19

6:30 pm

### Pattison Park Lodge

Learn a few very simple tips and techniques to make your nature photographs stand out. This class is intended for beginners of all ages. Registration is required. Please call 513.876.9013 to sign up.



## Butterfly Monitoring Crooked Run Nature Preserve & Chilo Lock 34 Park Weekly June - August

Anyone with an interest in butterflies is welcome to join this citizen scientist project. A weekly walk gathers data on local butterflies; all ages and experience levels are welcome. Contact Laura at [lhoople@co.clermont.oh.us](mailto:lhoople@co.clermont.oh.us)



or 513.876.9013 for more information. In 2009 we observed a total of 36 species of butterflies including; painted lady, harvester, monarch, giant swallowtail and many others. With your help we can hopefully eclipse last years total.



## A look back at Pattison Park



*The house once located at Pattison Park was torn down in the 1990's*



*Interior renovations to the lodge in the early 1990s made it a popular wedding and reception site.*



*The lake at Pattison Park was constructed in the 1980s.*



*The gazebo at Pattison was constructed in 1991 and remains a popular place for weddings.*



*A high ropes course, operated by Child Focus was located at Pattison Park before being abandoned in 2001.*

### ***Clermont County Park District Celebrates 40 Years.***

The Park District is working with the Clermont County Office of Public Information to produce a 40th anniversary video highlighting the growth and progress the park district has made since its inception in 1970. The video will be completed before the end of the summer. Visit our website for details when the video is completed.



## A look Back Sycamore Park



*Sycamore Park is the oldest park within the Park District. It opened to the public in 1971.*



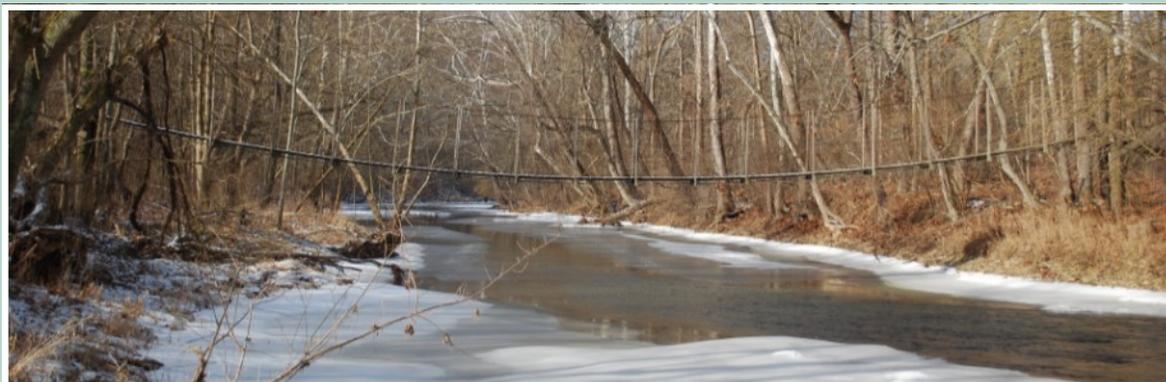
*Sycamore Park expanded in 2006 with the addition of 30 acres of land and a pedestrian bridge at the trailhead.*



*The park expanded again in 2009 with the addition of the 105 acre Wilson Nature Preserve, bringing the total acreage to 158 acres.*



*The original restroom building at Sycamore Park was torn down and replaced with a more modern building.*



*A swinging bridge was located in the Wilson Nature Preserve but was removed before the opening of the preserve in October 2009.*

## A look back Hartman Log Cabin



*Originally owned by CECOS international, the Hartman Log Cabin was scheduled to be demolished.*



*Once the original logs were discovered it was decided to restore the log house rather than demolish it.*



*After renovation of the cabin, a large tarp was used to cover it while it was treated for a wood boring insect.*



*After the renovation, the log cabin was donated by Cecos, to the Clermont County Park District in 1991.*



*A trail and wooden footbridge were built providing access to the nearby cemetery, where many members of the Hartman family are buried.*

# A look back Chilo Lock 34 Park



The park was acquired in 1985. The eight car garage and gas pumps pictured above were removed in 2000.



Though vacant at the time, the former power house had about three feet of water during the 1997 flood.



A new wetland and entrance road were constructed in 2001.



Groundbreaking on the Visitor Center and Museum renovations took place in June 2004.



After sitting vacant for 40 years, the former power house was renovated into a visitor center and museum.



Visitor Center and Museum Grand Opening August, 2005.



The Jennie Wade was brought to the park in 2005 and still calls Chilo Lock 34 Park home.



A new boat ramp and courtesy docks were built in 2008.



## Exploring our Parks 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Geocache Hunt

Geocaching is an increasingly popular, inclusive, fun and healthy pastime for individuals of all ages. It is also great for groups like families, friends, classes and youth groups working as teams. The sport combines technology with adventure, a combination that some people didn't think was possible. The core of the sport consists of using a hand held GPS receiver unit to guide you to a destination where a hidden container (or "cache") is stored. Once found, you log your visit in an included logbook, and optionally trade one of the many contained "goodies" for one of your own. Each cache will contain some information on the history of that park.

The Clermont County Park District will be joining in the fun of Geocaching and celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with placing 6 caches in 6 different parks. Pack up the family and enter the coordinates below and start your journey visiting and exploring your Clermont County Parks.

Each of the first five caches you find will have a piece of the sixth caches' coordinates, after visiting all five you'll have all the coordinates you'll need to find that bonus park, the one that started it all. Caches will be in place by Saturday, June 5.

While visiting each park take the time to enjoy the many amenities we have to offer: picnic shelters, playgrounds, hiking trails, paved walking paths, fishing, and much more.

You may start at any of the coordinates given below but to find the bonus cache you must visit all five.

N 38 47.402  
W 084 07.852

N 39 12.640  
W 084 18.453

N 39 08.153  
W 084 03.052

N 39 07.147  
W 084 08.884

(note: coordinates corrected on 6/10/10)

N 39 05.369  
W 084 11.189



Bonus Cache fill in the blanks below

N    \_ \_    \_ \_ . \_ \_ \_

W    \_ \_    \_ \_ . \_ \_ \_

To find out more about Geocaching go to [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com)

### 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.



<i>Park/Shelter</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Fee</i>
Chilo Lock 34 Park	50	\$50
Pattison Park	150	\$75
Sycamore Woods	50	\$50
Sycamore #2	150	\$75

### Attention Shutterbugs!

If you enjoy visiting the Clermont County parks, and you have a camera, then we're looking for you. The Park District has created a group on Flickr.com. We are always searching for good photographs to use on our website, newsletter, and media releases. If you would like to join our group and share your favorite Clermont County Park District photos just visit

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/clermontcountyparks/> or you can e-mail your park photos to [krobinson@co.clermont.oh.us](mailto:krobinson@co.clermont.oh.us)



### 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



## CHILO *Living and Working with the Ohio River*

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

**Summer Hours  
May 31 - September 6th**

**Sunday - Friday 12 pm to 5 pm  
Saturday 11 am to 5 pm**



### **Attention Scout and Youth Group Leaders!**

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

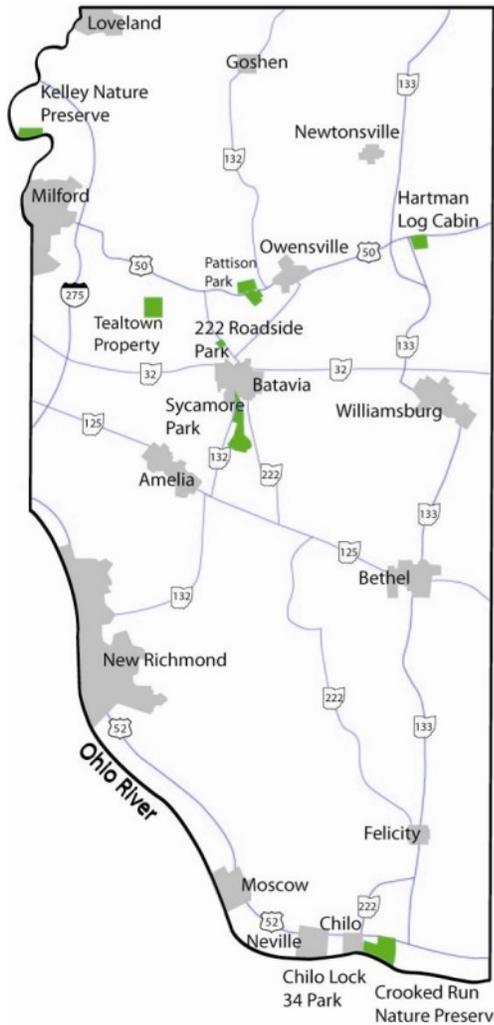
We have two yurts available at Chilo Lock 34 Park for Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, American Heritage Girls, church youth camps, or any other organized civic minded youth group. Yurts are \$50 per night and will comfortably sleep 20-25.

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.



The Clermont County Park District operates five parks, three green spaces, and two nature preserves totaling 449 acres.



### 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

www.parks.clermontcountyohio.gov

- 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
- Hartman Log Cabin (5 acres)**  
5272 Aber Road Williamsburg, OH 45176
- 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