

Glass City Metropark Highlights

Please use this as a supplement to information provided on any Metroparks maps.

Messages for Interpretation

Glass City Metropark's location near the mouth of the mighty Maumee has set the stage for a unique blend of nature and history.

- Glass City Metropark is a gateway and haven for migratory and nesting birds as well as other wildlife—all of which are supported by Metroparks restoration efforts.
- Through every era, the story of this land highlights its service to people as a place of abundant food, water and meaningful contributions to transportation and industry.
- A vibrant sense of ethnicity and hard-working blue collar heritage resonates from neighborhoods surrounding Glass City Metropark.
- On the fun side, this land holds incredible recreational history and opportunities that are sure to continue in its future.

What's In A Name?

This Metropark is appropriately named Glass City to reflect its importance as a hub for an industry that made Toledo famous.

Natural and Human History

At Glass City Metropark, the Maumee River provides a critical wildlife corridor and is home to a variety of fish, including Channel catfish, Freshwater drum, Crappy and Largemouth bass. Remarkable numbers of songbirds are found here as well, especially during spring migration, when they arrive from far-away wintering grounds via the Maumee Bay and Lake Erie. Some will use this site as stopover habitat on their journey north, some will nest upriver at places like our other river Metroparks and those within the Oak Openings Region, and some will stay and nest right here. This Metropark is also very important for pollinating insects, where bumblebees, other small bees, butterflies, wasps, beetles, and flies all play essential roles for future generations of plants. Conservation initiatives at Glass City include a pavilion made with specialized, bird-friendly glass, designed with an ultraviolet coating that is visible to birds without obstructing human views. Metroparks has also planted numerous tree species to enhance wildlife habitat, and seeded retention ponds, gardens, and prairie areas with native flowers that provide high quality nectar sources.

Local historians tell us that the waters and banks of the beautiful Maumee were choice locations for native tribes and settlers. As early as the 1650s, woodland tribes walked what are now the trails here, built an earthwork



Eastern bumblebee



Double-crested cormorant



Earthen tank relic



Green darner

fort just south of this land, and used the area that is now the Waite High School campus for campfires. French fur traders too were here, and they gave the Maumee its name, 'river of the Miamis,' in honor of that tribe. In the 1820s and 1830s, the first pioneer settlers were attracted by the rich farmlands. Elijah Woodruff, who owned part of this land along the river, operated a ferry service before there were any bridges. In 1865, Toledo's first bridge was built across the Maumee River at Cherry Street, and to cross it required a toll of 2 cents per person.

These years saw huge growth in industry along the river. The massive, rust-colored earthen tank relics exhibited here are from the site's industrial history, and adjacent street names of Steel, Licking and Carbon reflect a time when a rolling mill occupied part of this land. People of all ethnic backgrounds came to this area to earn a living wage, own their own land, and make a better life for their children. They labored at shipyards, casting plants, mills, oil refineries, glass factories, and railroads – building our city as they built new lives for their families. About the turn of the 20th century, a number of Bulgarian families arrived in East Toledo to form a thriving community along the river around the intersection of Front and Main. Also, in the 1890's, the nearby neighborhood of Birmingham – so named because of its resemblance to the heavy iron and steel producing region of Birmingham, England – was settled mainly by Hungarian immigrants. It has kept its ethnic traditions alive, having had another large wave of

immigration in the 1950s. Finally, Toledo Edison operated here, starting as a company in 1921, after streetcar operations run by Toledo Railways and Light (1901-1921) were sold. At this site, Toledo Edison provided jobs to a new generation for many decades to come.

History here also has had a lighthearted side to it. In addition to its ideal riverside location for boating and fishing, the presence of the historic Sports Arena (1947-2007) brought many leisure time opportunities. Its first event ever was the Holiday on Ice (November 13, 1947). From that date, the Sports Arena also became home for these Toledo ice hockey teams: The Mercurys, Blades, Hornets, Goaldiggers, and Toledo Storm. It was a well-known site for circuses and boxing events and a popular concert venue, hosting artists like Elvis Presley, Queen, Jackson 5, Bob Seger, and others. The future looks bright for similar fun at Glass City Metropark. A ribbon of ice will feature winter skating, and a lawn and pavilion will serve picnickers and outdoor concerts. From birding to paddling and cycling, visitors will enjoy their favorite pursuits on accessible walkways and blue-ways that offer something for all.

Plant Life

Common trees, shrubs and vines include:

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| Eastern cottonwood | Staghorn sumac |
| Green ash | Honey locust |
| Box elder | Willow sp |
| False indigo bush | Poison ivy |
| Wild grape | Virginia creeper |

A variety of maples and oaks, American sycamore and Redbud, Spicebush, Ninebark and American hazelnut are all part of the reforestation plan at this Metropark.

Native and nonnative plants include:

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| Black-eyed Susan | Gray-headed coneflower |
| Common boneset | Dense blazing star |
| Common dogbane | Common milkweed |
| Swamp milkweed | Showy tick trefoil |
| Virginia wild rye | Canada wild rye |
| Blue vervain | Canada goldenrod |
| Grass-leaved goldenrod | Stiff goldenrod |
| New England aster | Tall Ironweed |
| Yarrow | Common evening primrose |
| Cup plant | Broad-leaved plantain |
| Red Clover | Curly dock |
| Burdock | Chicory |

Many of the native plants listed above were sourced from Metroparks Seed Nursery at Blue Creek Metropark.

Wildlife

Mammals include:

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| Coyote | White tailed deer |
| Eastern fox squirrel | Raccoon |
| Ground hog | Virginia opossum |
| Eastern cottontail | Meadow vole |
| Big brown bat | Muskrat |



Ring-billed gull



Northern mockingbird



Meadow vole



Black-eyed Susan

Birds include:

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mourning dove | American goldfinch |
| Blue jay | Northern cardinal |
| American robin | Common grackle |
| Song sparrow | Barn swallow |
| Cliff swallow | Baltimore oriole |
| Gray catbird | Northern mockingbird |
| Killdeer | Spotted sandpiper |
| Warbling vireo | Yellow warbler |
| Cedar waxwing | Willow flycatcher |
| Great blue heron | Double-crested cormorant |
| Common nighthawk | Ring-billed gull |
| Mallard | Canada goose |
| Turkey vulture | Bald eagle |
| Rock pigeon (non-native) | Red-tailed hawk |
| House sparrow (non-native) | |
| European starling (non-native) | |

Amphibians/Reptiles include:

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| American toad | Western chorus frog |
| Common water snake | Northern brown snake |
| Midland painted turtle | Snapping turtle |
| Spiny softshell turtle | |

Notable Insects include:

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| Monarch | Pearl crescent |
| Black swallowtail | Tiger swallowtail |
| Red admiral | Southern dogface sulfur |
| Clouded sulfur | Silver-spotted skipper |
| Eastern bumble bee | Green darner |
| Black saddlebags | Bluet species |

Stay on trails and use protective clothing and insecticide to avoid poison ivy, chiggers, ticks and mosquitoes.

(Note: There is no poison oak in Northwest Ohio.)