

Beach Ridge Area Highlights



**METROPARKS
TOLEDO**

Messages for Interpretation

Beach Ridge Area offers engaging experiences for adventurous visitors looking to test their mettle in the Oak Openings Region.

- The Cannaley Treehouse Village located at Beach Ridge Area is Metroparks Toledo Foundation's first successful funding campaign utilizing, 750 donors to make this bird's eye camping view a reality.
- With the purchase of this land, Metroparks became the owner of 400 acres of contiguous land in the Oak Openings Region.
- Beach Ridge is one of Ohio's premier outdoor recreation destinations, with amenities including the Mercy Fitpark Ride, 11 mile Mountain Bike Trail, Cannaley Treehouse Village, and Wheelhouse.
- Conservation efforts at Beach Ridge have helped restore floodplain and prairie habitats for wildlife at a site that was slated to become a golf course.

What's in the Name?

The sandy soil and parabolic dunes characteristic of the Oak Openings region in Ohio are remnants of beaches that lined ancestral Lake Erie at the end of the last Ice Age (the Wisconsin glaciation). As the glacier retreated and water levels behind it dropped, more and more beach was exposed to wind, which reshaped the sand into the subtle ridges we see here today.

Natural and Human History

Both upland and wet woodland communities are represented at Beach Ridge Area. The wetlands are much more than just soggy puddles. Known as vernal pools, they are hot spots for many types of wildlife. Typically wettest in spring, they support all sorts of aquatic creatures from fairy shrimp to water scorpions, and come alive with the sounds of frogs, toads and ducks. Such pools can be found south of the bike trail. The topography of Beach Ridge Area also includes scenic forest ravines with a unique variety of plant life adapted to the sandy soil and lower light levels under the tree canopy. Nearby meadows and open areas are being restored to the native prairie communities that are another key component of the Oak Openings region.

Over the years, many wetlands were lost due to development and urbanization, and their floodplain storage capacity was lost with them. Invasive, nonnative plants like Reed Canary Grass overtook the remaining ditches. Metroparks has undertaken a floodplain capacity restoration project here, funded through and OEPA and SWIF grant, to begin correcting some of that damage. The ditch near the entrance to Beach Ridge Area was restored to a stream-side habitat with optimal plant communities and reduced bank erosion. The resulting waterway will



Cannaley Treehouse Village



Gray tree frog



Pincushion moss

support healthy water quality, wildlife, and fishes, control storm water, and be beautiful as well.

The property that makes up Beach Ridge was previously owned by Linda and Jim Cannaley, who planned to turn it into a golf course named Saddlehorn. Fortunately for Metroparks, those plans never came to be. Mrs. Cannaley agreed to sell the land to Metroparks in a series of transactions from 2013 to 2015, which were funded with a combination of levy funds and grants. Thanks to that property transfer, Metroparks now owns over 400 acres of contiguous land in this globally-rare ecoregion. Such continuity is important to maintaining habitat quality.

The Cannaley Treehouse Village, named in recognition of the previous land owners, affords a great opportunity for visitors to stay overnight and get a deeper experience of this special region. The Metroparks staff who constructed these unique cabins and tent platforms received training from Tree House Masters in specialized construction techniques. Metroparks Toledo Foundation's first successful fundraising campaign united the support of 750 donors to make this project's creative vision into reality.

Beach Ridge Area is also a top-notch destination for mountain bikers. The Mercy Fitpark Ride course gives intermediate and advanced mountain bikers a chance to practice their skills before hitting the 12-mile long single-track trail. That well-known and popular trail was built by mountain bikers for mountain bikers through the cooperative efforts of Metroparks staff and dedicated volunteers. The Wheelhouse rounds out the biking experience at Beach Ridge. After spending time on the skills course and trail, riders can unwind and sample local fare from the vendor who operates that venue.

Plant Life

Trees and shrubs include:

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| American elm | Black cherry |
| Cottonwood | Pin oak |
| Red maple | White oak |
| Buttonbush | Spicebush |
| Witch hazel | |

Groundcover plants and mosses include:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Gooseberry species | Greenbrier |
| Jack-in-the-pulpit | Lowbush blueberry |
| Marsh marigold | Mayapple |
| Rose species (native) | Royal fern |
| Sensitive fern | Spinulose wood fern |
| Virginia knotweed | Atrichum moss |
| Haircap moss | Endoton moss |
| Fern moss | Pincushion moss |
| Ghost pipe | |

Wildlife

Mammals include:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Coyote | Eastern cottontail rabbit |
| Red and Gray fox | Southern flying squirrel |
| White-tailed deer | |

Birds include:

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| American goldfinch | American woodcock |
| Common yellowthroat | Great horned owl |
| Hermit thrush | Indigo bunting |
| Pileated woodpecker | Scarlet tanager |
| Sparrow species (native) | Whip-poor-will |
| Wild turkey | |

Arthropods include:

Crayfish (native)

Reptiles and amphibians include:

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Blue racer snake | Eastern hognose snake |
| Gray tree frog | Midland painted turtle |
| Mole salamander | Spring peeper |
| Western chorus frog | Wood frog |

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.)



Virginia knotweed



Spicebush



Buttonbush



Spinulose wood fern



Gray fox



American woodcock



Midland painted turtle



Common yellowthroat