

# Glass City Metropark Highlights



**METROPARKS  
TOLEDO**

## 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.

- 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 the 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. Conscious of glass strikes as a lead killer of birds, Metroparks has taken pains to install glass with preventive measures to help keep our migratory flyways safe. 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 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



*Eastern bumblebee*



*Double-crested cormorant*



*Earthen tank relic*



*Green darner*

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.

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 Maumee Rolling Mills Company 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. The Ribbon features 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:

Eastern cottonwood	Staghorn sumac
Green ash	Honey locust
Box elder	Willow species
False indigo bush	Virginia creeper
Wild grape	

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 non-native plants include:

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 Native Nursery at Blue Creek Metropark.

## Wildlife

### Mammals include:

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

### Birds include:

Mourning dove	American goldfinch
Blue jay	Northern cardinal
American robin	Common grackle
Song sparrow	Barn swallow



Ring-billed gull



Northern mockingbird



Meadow vole



Black-eyed Susan

Cliff swallow  
Gray catbird  
Killdeer  
Warbling vireo  
Cedar waxwing  
Great blue heron  
Red-tailed hawk  
Common nighthawk  
Mallard  
Turkey vulture

Baltimore oriole  
Northern mockingbird  
Spotted sandpiper  
Yellow warbler  
Willow flycatcher  
Double-crested cormorant  
Ring-billed gull  
Canada goose  
Bald eagle

### Amphibians / reptiles include:

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

### Notable insects include:

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.)