

Farnsworth Metropark Highlights



**METROPARKS
TOLEDO**

Messages for Interpretation

Rocks and water combine to create unique land features, history and recreational opportunities at Farnsworth Metropark.

- Rich in Maumee River geology, Farnsworth Metropark boasts the only site of the exposed Bowling Green Fault and offers rapids and rock outcroppings.
- The obvious natural features of Farnsworth Metropark have been an attraction to people since pre-settlement.
- Sculpted by nature and defined by people, this park reflects those who influenced its development.
- Since its inception as a park in the 1930s, Farnsworth has provided generations of visitors a beautiful river backdrop for recreational pursuits such as swimming, boating, dancing, camping and cycling.
- Farnsworth Metropark preserves river habitats exceptional for animal, fish and plant biodiversity.

What's In A Name?

Once a favorite swimming site known as Waterville Park, the area was named Farnsworth Metropark in 1937. W.W. Farnsworth was an Ohio Senator, Metroparks board member and Waterville orchardist.

Natural and Human History

The Maumee River watershed covers an area about 6,600 square miles, and is the largest watershed in the Great Lakes System. The land adjacent to the Maumee River, called floodplain, is critical for ecological function, allowing space for floodwaters, reducing erosion, filtering water as it returns to the mainstream, and providing wildlife habitat. The land on the opposite side of the Maumee River from Farnsworth Metropark was once a massive wetland known as the Great Black Swamp, and stretched from Fort Wayne, Indiana all the way to the marshes of Lake Erie.

The limestone bedrock seen at rapids and outcroppings at Farnsworth is over 400 million years old. The Bowling Green Fault—an 100-mile vertical fault-- runs from near Findlay, Ohio into Michigan. Farnsworth Metropark is the only site where it is exposed and visible.

The state-owned islands between Farnsworth and Bendview Metroparks are named Missionary, Butler and Indian Islands. These islands were once home to the Ottawa and included in their villages.

The islands, as well as a large, visible boulder in the river known as Roche de Bout (sometimes spelled Roche de Boeuf) were used as landmarks by Native Americans, settlers and armies. Roche de Bout was the home of Pontiac's village in 1763.

The Legion of the United States encamped on Roche De Bout after building Camp Deposit, two days prior to



Former interurban bridge



Bowling Green fault



Redbud tree



Bladdernut



Wild ginger



Halberd-leaved mallow

the Battle of Fallen Timbers on August 20, 1794. Captain Zebulon Pike along with 200 soldiers stayed encamped while General Anthony Wayne's Legion marched towards Fort Miami.

Farnsworth, Bend View and Providence Metroparks all are part of what used to be the Miami-Erie Canal and its towpath. The canal operated the late 1820's until the early 1900's, and connected northwest Ohio to Cincinnati.

The abandoned Interurban Bridge at the eastern edge of Farnsworth was once the world's largest earth-filled, concrete reinforced bridge. Part of a commuter railway system, it was supported in part by the Roche de Bout boulder.

The stone shelters at Farnsworth were the work of the Great Depression era Works Progress Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps, two federal initiatives to help put Americans back to work. Today two of the Adirondacks can be reserved as campsites.

Plant Life

Wildflowers at Farnsworth include:

Bloodroot	Trout lily
Spring beauty	Wild ginger
Wild geranium	Jack-in-the-pulpit
Water willow (aquatic)	Stinging nettle
Halberd-leaved rose mallow	Common white aster
Canada goldenrod	Blue lettuce

Common trees and shrubs include:

Northern hackberry	Eastern cottonwood
American sycamore	Ohio buckeye
Box elder	Bladdernut
Paw paw	Fragrant sumac

Red bud, a small native tree that brightens many areas along the Towpath Trail, flowers in mid-April to May.

Wildlife

Notable reptiles and amphibians include:

Common water snake	Midland painted turtle
Snapping turtle	Green frog
Eastern cricket frog	

Insects at Farnsworth include:

Firefly species	Spittlebug
Spring & summer azures	Hackberry butterfly
Ebony jewelwing (damselfly)	American rubyspot (damselfly)
Common whitetail (dragonfly)	Eastern amberwing (dragonfly)

Aquatic macroinvertebrates live under rocks at the Roche de Bout Rapids and are monitored as indicators of water quality.

Birds include:

Great blue heron	Great egret
Spotted sandpiper	Solitary sandpiper
Greater and Lesser yellowlegs	Ring billed gull
Herring gull	Osprey
Bald eagle	Great horned owl
Wood duck	Belted kingfisher
Cedar waxwing	Baltimore oriole

Cliff swallows nest in the stonework of the historic Inter-urban Bridge.

Cranes are not commonly seen at our river Metroparks. Heron species are much more common.

Fish include:

Yellow perch	Smallmouth bass
Green sunfish	Orangespotted sunfish
Walleye	Emerald shiner
Channel catfish	Tadpole madtom
Gizzard shad	Greenside darter

Mammals include:

Coyote	Raccoon
Eastern chipmunk	Red squirrel
Muskrat	Mink
Striped skunk	Virginia opossum
Big brown bat	

American beaver have occurred at Farnsworth, but no known populations currently exist.

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.)



Water willow



Amberwing dragonfly



Cliff swallow



Common water snake



Bald eagle



Cedar waxwing