



Welcome to the Oak Openings Preserve Horse Trail. The 22.1-mile trail winds through sand dunes, wet prairies, wet woods, pine forests and oak savannas of the 4,000-acre Metropark. With its flat terrain, the trail is accessible to riders and horses of all abilities.

For your convenience, a Horse Riders Center is located on Jeffers Road with ample parking for trailers, restrooms, water, hitching posts and a picnic shelter with grills. Two other rest areas are located at Evergreen Lake and Springbrook Lake, where restrooms and water are available, as well as access for horses to drink from the lake.

Oak Openings is unlike any other habitat in Ohio. The Metropark is named for the surrounding region made up of eastern hardwood forest and western prairie. This combination forms a rare and beautiful blend of habitats and species found only a few places in the world. And it is home to about one-third of all rare and endangered species in the state.

Just a few examples of the wildlife you may observe here include deer, coyotes, flying squirrels, mink, badgers, hognose snakes, turtles, wild turkey, hawks, owls, flickers, indigo buntings, goldfinches and woodpeckers. The area is noted for the number and variety of birds that nest or rest here at various times of the year, including the lark sparrow, an endangered species that nests in the dunes.

The Oak Openings is also known for its array of wildflowers and other plants. Look for these species during your ride: wild lupine, big bluestem, blazing star, little blue stem, bush clover, bergamot, sweet fern, tall coreopsis, cardinal flower, wild asters, Indian grass, trillium, May apple, columbine, iron weed, black-eyed Susan, grey headed coneflower, tall meadow rue, prickly-pear cactus, golden rod, tick trefoil, marsh marigolds and spring beauties.

Metroparks manages certain areas of the park by mowing, burning and removing non-native trees and other plants. You may see areas where these land management techniques have been used to enhance or restore the natural oak savanna habitat. The pine trees you will encounter were planted here in the 1940s and are not native to the region.

### Nearby

- Maumee State Forest, over 3,000 acres adjacent to Oak Openings Preserve, has 15 miles of bridle trails and horse-trailer parking on Neowash Rd. Parking is also available on State Route 64, with a trail leading into Oak Openings.
- Mary Jane Thurston State Park is located along both sides of the Maumee River, south of Oak Openings. The park's North Turkeyfoot Area has six miles of trails for horseback riding, backpacking and mountain biking.

### Things You Should Know

- Oak Openings is a day-use park open every day of the year from 7 a.m. to dark.
- Horses are permitted only on the marked horse trail and not on roads, fire lanes or trails designated for walking, biking or skiing. Horses may not be ridden in picnic areas and should be kept away from ditch banks and ravines.
- Bicycles are not permitted on the horse trail.
- Alcohol is not permitted in any area of the park.
- Dogs must be on leashes no longer than eight feet long at all times.
- Hitching posts are provided to tie horses. Please do not tie horses to trees or fences.
- Call 419-407-9710 to obtain a free group permit for all organized events involving horse trail and horse facility use.
- Insect repellent is recommended in late spring and summer to protect against mosquitoes, deer flies and horse flies.

Note: In an emergency, call the number below for the Lucas County Sheriff Dispatcher.

Calling 911 from a cell phone will connect you with the Ohio Highway Patrol.

Oak Openings Preserve Metropark  
4139 Girdham Road  
Swanton, OH 43558

Ranger Cell Phone: 419-360-9179

Emergency—  
Lucas County Sheriff: 419-213-4977

# Oak Openings Horse Trail

Oak Openings Preserve Metropark





# Trails



## Horse

- Horse Trail
- Wabash-Cannonball Horse Trail Connector
- Wabash-Cannonball Trail
- Horses restricted to designated trail.
- Trailer parking on Jeffers Rd.

- Restricted—No horses
- Grasslands & Thickets
- Woodland & Savanna
- Evergreen Forest
- Trail maps
- Trailhead

Round Trip Miles

14.5

# Oak Openings Preserve Metropark

3765 acres

## Metroparks Rules and Regulations

**9.1 Riding Permit and Area Misuse**  
Persons shall only use, ride or drive any horse or other animal upon bridle paths designated and established for horseback riders while within the park. (MM)

**9.2 Areas Where Horses Are Permitted**  
Horseback riders shall stay on the designated bridle trails when away from the stable areas and are not permitted elsewhere in the park. (MM)

**9.3 Horseback Riding Safety**  
No person shall ride a horse along any bridle trail without due respect for other riders, vehicles, or pedestrians or so as to endanger the life, limb, or property of any person while in lawful use of the park. (MM)

**9.4 Leaving Horses Unattended**  
No person shall leave a horse unattended within the park other than for purpose of stabling at a designated stable area. (MM)

**9.5 Mistreatment of Horses**  
No rider or other person shall mistreat, override cruelly beat, mutilate, or torture any horse within the park. (MM)

**9.6 Horseback Riding Only**  
No person shall use, ride, or drive any horse or other animal driven cart, wagon, sled or other conveyance upon any park trails. (MM)

**20.35 Motor Vehicle Right of Way to Horses**  
No person while operating a motor vehicle on a roadway in or adjacent to the park shall fail to slow down and stop the vehicle when signaled to do so upon meeting or overtaking a horse-drawn vehicle or person on horseback and to remain stationary until the vehicle or person has passed provided the signal to stop is given in good faith under circumstances of necessity and only as often and for that length of time as is required for the vehicle or persons to pass whether it is approaching from the front or rear. (MM-1st offense; 2nd offense-cite under ORC4549.01A)

**20.1 Established Ways of Travel**  
No person by foot, vehicle, motor vehicle, or animal shall use any portion of the park for means of travel except driveways, roadways, streets, highways, trails or any other means of travel established for such purposes. Vehicles and persons shall not enter the park except by established ways of travel. NOTE: Individuals who use mobility assist vehicles are exempt from this regulation. (MM)

**20.46 Multi-Trail Use Right of Way**  
When trail conditions require a right of way for safe passage, horse riders have the primary right of way, hikers next and then cyclists while on park district property trails. (MM)

**8.1 Dogs, Cats and Other Animals**  
Dogs, cats and other domestic pets, household or exotic animals are prohibited in the parks except under the conditions stated below or in areas designated by the Director. No person shall suffer or permit such pet or animal to enter a park or run at large in a park or remain unattended at any time while in the park. All such pets and animals shall be controlled at all times when permitted in the park on a leash not more than eight feet long unattended by and under the immediate control of the owner or another. The owner of such a pet or animal shall remove animal waste from any areas of the park grounds and must carry at all times a visible means of collecting and disposing waste properly in designated areas. Owners must comply with all state and local health and licensing requirements and any constraints imposed by law, ordinance or regulation. Waste removal shall be waited for the owner of an assist dog. (MM)

**4.6 Possession of Alcoholic Beverages**  
No person shall be under the influence of any intoxicating liquor or alcoholic beverage within the park, nor have in his/her possession consume (drink) any intoxicating liquor or alcoholic beverage within the park except in certain enclosed or designated areas. (MM) (ORC 4301.62B3)

