The goats have done a great job maintaining the grass at the parks. These before and after photos were taken at Bur Oak Landing West.

### Stewardship Workdays

**Please join us! Many hands make light work**

**Seed Collection:**
Hemlock Crossing, Sunday, October 5, 2-4PM. Help collect and process seed from the plants in the short-grass prairie in front of the Nature Education Center. Seed will be used for restoration projects within other Ottawa County Parks properties.

**Invasive Species Control:**
Crockery Creek Natural Area, Saturday, October 11, 10AM-Noon. Grose Park, Saturday, October 18, 10AM-Noon. Invasive trees, shrubs and vines can cause serious damage to wildlife habitat. They can also block recreational trails and scenic views. Help Ottawa County Parks fight these destroyers of diversity. Never volunteered before? No problem! Here’s what you should know: Bring work gloves (preferably leather), insect repellent and appropriate outdoor gear. All necessary tools, drinking water and snacks will be provided. No preregistration is required. Ages 12 and up are welcome, however youth must be supervised by an adult. Canceled if raining. Do you have more questions? Contact Melanie at 616-738-4810 or mmstraction@miottawa.org. See you there!

### Project Updates

#### Grand River Heritage Water Trail

The public is invited to the Friends’ Annual Membership Meeting and program on Wednesday, September 17. Acclaimed naturalist, Randy Baker, will provide a dramatic, interactive presentation called “Michigan Statehood & Beyond,” bringing to life the forces and factors that shaped our unique state. As an added attraction, the Ottawa Shores Plein Air artists will have a number of their recent works on display, depicting scenes from many Ottawa County Parks. The event takes place at the Nature Education Center at Hemlock Crossing County Park located at 8115 West Olive Road, West Olive. Doors open at 6:30PM for enjoying the artwork and refreshments. Main program begins at 7PM.

#### Grand River Open Space Expands

Grand River Open Space, Grand River Heritage Water Trail. Above: An eagle on the nest in early spring. Left: Ray Statema, President of the Friends of Ottawa County Parks on this fun-filled afternoon.

#### Outdoors in Ottawa County

The quarterly newsletter of the Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission.

### Water Trail Map

**Conner Bayou Picnic & Kayak Launch**

We had a beautiful afternoon at the Conner Bayou Picnic & Kayak Launch Dedication. Thank you for joining us and the Friends of Ottawa County Parks on this fun-filled afternoon.

#### Grand River Greenway

Grand River Greenway, a high priority initiative of Ottawa County Parks over the past fifteen years. Over 2,400 acres with trails, rivers and wetlands: a great place for nature lovers to explore. Kayaking or canoeing on the Grand is a great way to experience the many properties that have been preserved through the Grand River Heritage Water Trail website provides information on parks and other places to access the river, natural features to be observed, and permits. Soft, ringspun cotton t-shirts and insulated Camelbak bottles are available for purchase. The purchase of the river for paddling and fishing is part of Ottawa County Parks' Grand River Greenway initiatives to protect the river and its habitat for future generations.

#### Grand River Open Space

Grand River Open Space Expands

Zemaitis Trust to expand Grand River Open Space in Tallmadge Township. The purchase is part of Ottawa County Parks' Grand River Greenway initiative, which is dedicated to protecting the river and its habitat for future generations. The purchase is part of Ottawa County Parks' Grand River Greenway initiative, which is dedicated to protecting the river and its habitat for future generations. The purchase is part of Ottawa County Parks' Grand River Greenway initiative, which is dedicated to protecting the river and its habitat for future generations.

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**Remembering the Passenger Pigeon, extant September 27, 2027.**

**Lewis Croix, the Painter of Passenger Pigeons:** September 4, 7-8PM. Hemlock Crossing. Wally Ewing and Marjie Viveen will present a program on the life of Lewis Croix, local legend and artist best known for depicting Passenger Pigeons on canvas. Two examples can be seen at the Nature Education Center.

**Understanding Extinction:** September 6, 1-2PM, Hemlock Crossing. When you hear the word “extinction,” do you think of dinosaurs? This term may ring a bit closer to home after hearing the story of the Passenger Pigeon and participating in activities geared to help kids understand extinction.

**Passengers of the Pigeon River:** September 6, 3-4PM, Hemlock Crossing. Do you know how the Pigeon River got its name? Hear the story of this once indescribably abundant bird and what led to its extinction 100 years ago.

**Kayak Trip-Passengers of the Pigeon River:** September 13, 9:30AM-12:30PM, Hemlock Crossing. Paddle a 3.5 mile stretch of the Pigeon River and learn its history. Return transportation is via carpool. No experience is needed. The fee is $8 per person plus $26 if renting kayak, paddle and life jacket. Pre-registration is required. Details will be sent prior to the trip.

**A Sad Fate-The Passenger Pigeon:** September 18, 7-8PM, Hemlock Crossing. Kyle Bagnall, Historian and Michigan Coordinator of Project Passenger Pigeons, will discuss the costs of early explorers, missionaries and traders, and uncovers tales of the last “grand nesting” in Petoskey in 1878. This multimedia presentation will utilize historic lithographs, paintings and photos that follow this tragic story from our past in an effort to help build a sustainable future.

**Sunday Family Programs:** Various Dates, 2-3:30PM, Hemlock Crossing. These programs are designed for families with children ages five and up. Pre-registration is required at least two days in advance. A fee of $5 per person will be collected at the door for those who pre-register. A $2 per person fee will be charged for late registrants and those who are not pre-registered. We do not expect to be able to accommodate walk-in guests. For detailed descriptions, like us on Facebook, sign up for NaturE-mail or call the Nature Education Center.

- **September 7:** Understanding Extinction
- **September 9:** The Great Lakes
- **September 11:**-Insect, has declined 90 percent since the 1990s. Learn how you can help and see some of these amazing creatures.

**Warbler Walks:** Various Dates, 8-10AM, Various Locations. September is to warblers what fall is to mayflies in spring. The difference is that they wear drab plumage and don’t sing. This makes them more elusive and a challenge to ID, yet worth the effort!

- **September 8 & September 20:** Grand Ravines North
- **September 24:** Mt. Pisgah (Steeves-Stairs Nature Trail)

**After the Harvest Hike:** September 13, 2-4PM, Riley Trails. We’ll explore Riley Trails to see the effects of the red pine harvest in 2012 and restoration work in 2013. Binoculars recommended.

**Coastal Plain Marsh Excursion:** September 13, 6-8PM, Port Sheldon Natural Area. Want to learn more about one of Michigan’s rarest ecosystems? Join this off-trail excursion into the second largest park property. Binoculars recommended.

**Autumn Walks:** Various Dates, 10-11:30AM, Various Locations. Explore a new park and observe the subtle changes as plants and animals prepare for the winter season.

- **September 17:** Kirk Park
- **September 24:** Macatawa Greenspace
- **October 1:** Mt. Pisgah (Meet at Black Lake East)
- **October 15:** Royal Mound Natural Area
- **October 22:** Connor Bayou
- **October 29:** Pigeon Creek

**Fall Fungus Hike:** September 20, 8AM-noon, Hemlock Crossing. Join expert, Dennis Dunlap, to see and identify a variety of mushrooms and other fungi. Pre-registration required on September 18.

**Leaf Collecting Workshop:** September 20, 2-4PM, Hemlock Crossing. Leaf collections can seem daunting. Using a simple key, you can be more easily identify and collect leaves responsibly and identify trees by their leaves. Free; however, pre-registration is required by September 16.

**Raptor Watch:** September 21, 8-11AM, Mt. Pisgah. Many raptors use the Michigan shoreline as they migrate south. Join us as we climb Mt. Pisgah’s stairs to spot these birds of prey. Projects that are finished on the weather and the birds. Bring drinking water and binoculars. Some volunteers will be available.

**Gardening for Monarchs & More:** September 28, 7-8PM, Hemlock Crossing. The monarch butterfly, the nation’s most recognized pollinator is declining as a result of habitat loss. Learn how you can save the planet, starting in your own back yard, in a fun and beautiful way.

**Park Addresses**

Connor Bayou: 12845 North Cedar Drive, Grand Haven. One of the most remote and uncrowded portions of the park, 200 yards of woods between North Cedar Drive, west of 120th Avenue.

Crockery Creek: 11071 Wren Drive, Nunica

Eastmanville Farm: 7851 Leeland Road, Coopersville

Grand Ravines: 3991 Fillmore Street, Jenison

Grose Park: 22200 24th Avenue, Casnovia

Hemlock Crossing: 115 West Olive Road, West Olive

Kirk Park: 9791 Laketown Drive NE, West Olive

Macatawa Greenspace: 1230 Paw Paw Drive, Holland

Mt. Pisgah: 2227 Ottawa Beach Road, Holland

Black Lake Boardwalk: Hike back 700 feet on the bike path to the Mt. Pisgah trailhead.

North Beach: 18775 North Shore Drive, Ferrysburg

Pigeon Creek: 1254 Stanton Street, West Olive

Riverside Park: 10317 North Cedar Drive, Grand Haven

Rosy Mound: 13925 Lakeside Drive NE, Grand Haven

Visit miOttawa.org/parks to learn more about Ottawa County’s 6,400 acres of parks and open spaces. For your enjoyment, Operable Improvements and a wide variety of programs, we encourage you to visit us at your leisure. Or, if you own a $150,000 home, you’ll invest $23 per month in opportunities for recreation and natural education today and for future generations.

Thank you!