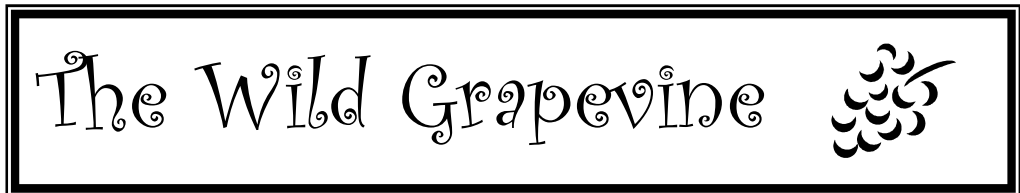




The Wild Grapevine



Vol. 5 No. 3 July 2009

The Wild Grapevine will provide you with nature-related articles and upcoming event information four times per year. Annual pass holders will receive this newsletter free as part of their benefits. Others may subscribe for \$5.00 per year for mailed copies. Send your email address to metea@allencountyparks.org to get free e-mailed copies.

Allen County Parks website:
www.allencountyparks.org

Fox Island Alliance website:
<http://www.foxislandalliance.org>

Friends of Metea website:
friendsofmetea.blogspot.com

www.nistem.org

Allen County Parks is a partner in the NISTEM network – students and teachers can join NISTEM free for a limited time.



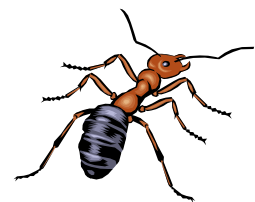
ANTics – Part 2

By Bob Dispenza, Park and Education Manager, Allen County Parks, Fort Wayne, IN

There was so much interesting about ants that we couldn't fit it all in one article. This is a continuation of last issue's article.

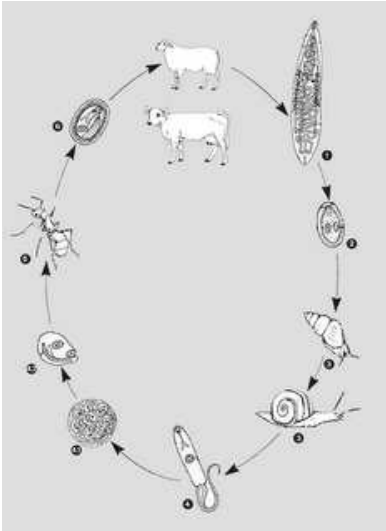
The main reason we can't have giant ants (like in the old sci-fi movie "Them!") is that insects depend on oxygen diffusing into their bodies through spiracles – holes in their sides that lead to almost every cell. Air can only diffuse so far through these tubes, and insects have no active oxygen transport system, such as lungs or gills and blood. Once insects get up to a certain size (about as big as the palm of your hand), oxygen can no longer diffuse into their internal tissues. Without oxygen, the internal cells would die and rot, killing the insect. When oxygen levels were higher in the past, insects could be larger due to increased diffusion. The insect exoskeleton also has limited strength, and large sizes would cause collapse or buckling of the plates when the insect muscles were used.

Communication is mostly chemical and tactile. Ants recognize each other by "smell" and "touch." Other ants that don't "smell right" are subject to attack. Alarm pheromones given off by a few can rile up the whole nest. Some information is transferred through the colony by social feeding (trophallaxis), where ants feed each other on request from a special stomach or mouth cavity. This lets the whole colony know how many ants are doing what jobs and how healthy the queen is. Some primitive ants have large eyes and hunt by sight, but most depend heavily on their antennae for chemical instructions. This limits their ability to recognize invaders and parasites – if it smells right and gives good things (honeydew or other sweet secretions), it must be OK, even if it is eating ant larvae or stored food.



Myrmecophiles ("ant lovers") live with the ants, and are a diverse lot. Some clean the nest of dead insects or fungus, some eat food the ants have stored, and some eat ants themselves or their larvae or eggs. Some trick the ants into feeding them by chemically posing as an ant. Some reward their hosts with sweet secretions. Some myrmecophiles are never found outside ant nests, while others may live independently.

The little six-legged wonders we call ants are involved in some pretty strange ecological relationships. The lancet fluke is a parasite of many farm animals, but uses ants to get to them. The eggs from an infected animal are deposited with their dung. These are eaten by land snails, and the eggs hatch. The hatchling creatures go through several changes, eventually winding up in the snail's mantle cavity. There they irritate the snail into surrounding



them with mucus, making “slime balls,” which the snail leaves behind. Ants are attracted to the slime balls and eat them.

Most of the developing flukes inside migrate to the middle of the ant, where they become infective (can infect their final host – a farm animal). But ants mostly avoid bright light, and so are not usually eaten by farm animals. The microscopic flukes resort to mind control. One or two of them migrate to the ant’s “brain” and wrap themselves around the nerves. This causes the ant to behave the opposite of what it usually would. Instead of going into the nest at night, it stays out. And instead of staying low, it climbs to the top of grass stems and holds on with its jaws, where it remains all night. That way, when grazing animals start feeding in the morning, the ant is in a place where it could be eaten. If it is not eaten, as the sun warms it up, it goes back to normal behavior – until that evening. Eventually it gets eaten and the fluke can move to the farm animal’s liver area, where it matures and starts producing eggs.

Graphic from “Parasitologie und Parasitismus”, Swiss Tropical Institute

Ant society parallels human society in some interesting ways.

Agriculture – Ants are involved in raising fungus gardens underground and in “herding” aphids and other insects for honeydew. Ant “farmers” will

protect their herds from predators and move them around during unfavorable weather. The fungus some ants grow is never found outside their nests.

War - Shining amazon [*Polyergus*] ants cannot even raise their own young or feed themselves – they must raid other ant nests and take slaves, which are usually larvae that will recognize no other nest or masters when they mature. Since the conquerors can’t even take care of their own young, they must continually raid other nests for new slaves.

Specialization of labor – Ants have “millers” to grind grain, repletes to store excess, soldiers to repel invaders, nurses to care for young, and “aristocrats” to reproduce (but the real rulers are the workers, who control the colony through chemical communication). Unlike bees, some ants have more than one queen in a nest.

What’s good about them? Ants are on par with earthworms as soil movers and aerators. They are one of our main scavengers of dead animals and cleaners of our natural areas. So the next time uninvited guests show up at your picnic, remember how hard they work and how much they care for their sisters. They don’t eat much – throw ‘em a few crumbs!

Mad Anthony Brewery - One of Sol Fest’s Oldest & Leading Supporters

Perhaps no one is more excited about Fox Island’s Sol Fest than Mad Anthony Brewery’s Blaine Stuckey. Superlatives flow like a sparkling ale from an open tap when he talks about Sol Fest. For Blaine Sol Fest is not just a great showcase for Mad Anthony’s line of craft brewed ales. He is excited that Mad Anthony Brewery’s presence at this popular spring event means more kids will come in contact with nature through Allen County Parks and Recreation’s environmental education programs. Sol Fest is ACPR’s annual fund raiser for our scholarship fund. This scholarship fund allows hundreds of kids to attend our school field trips and day camps that couldn’t afford to otherwise. Park interpretive staff have observed that these visits are, increasingly, children’s only exposure to nature, wild lands and environmental education.



Mad Anthony Brewery has been a fixture at every Sol Fest since 2000. Its owners and staff have generously donated the profits of their beer garden sales each year, making them cumulatively the largest financial supporter

of the event and therefore the scholarship fund it benefits. Their donation for 2009 alone was \$2250.00. Additionally, their presence has enhanced the Sol Fest Beer Garden and Music Stage experience for fans of fine microbrews and wine. Let us all raise a glass to the owners of the Mad Anthony Brewery for their continuing support of Sol Fest, its scholarship fund and Allen County Parks' environmental education efforts.

The Allen County Park Board and staff would also like to thank our other sponsors for Sol Fest 09, Physical Medicine Consultants, Parkview Occupational Health, Tom Russell and Ameriprise, Rock 104 WXKE, whatzup, and Fox Fort Wayne.

Upcoming Programs for Summer

Program fees are usually \$2.00 per person unless otherwise stated, and are used to provide operating funds (which are not supported by tax revenue) for Allen County Parks. Reservations are usually requested to allow resource and staff allocation planning. There may be requirements for a minimum number registered to offer the program.

Your Allen County Parks

Fox Island County Park, 7324 Yohne Road, southwest Fort Wayne (260) 449-3180

Metea County Park, 8401 Union Chapel Road at State Route 1, Leo-Cedarville (260) 449-3777

Payton County Park, 13928 Dunton Rd. just east of Hometown between Gump and Hathaway Roads


Cook's Landing County Park, corner of Shoaff and Coldwater Roads

Programs with the  logo provide NISTEM reward points

Summer Day Camps

June 15-August 7, Monday through Friday

Sign your child (ages 6-12) up for a week of summer camp at Fox Island or consider our Creepy Creek Critters Camp along scenic Cedar Creek at Metea County Park. Registration forms available at www.allencountyparks.org on the Summer Day Camp link found under Programs and Day Camps. All camps are subject to cancellation.

 **30 points per week**

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Cost: \$100.00/week

Pre-register 5 days prior to each week of camp.

Min: 12 per week

Max: 30 per week

Fox Island & Metea County Parks

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley



Monarch Larva Monitoring Project

July 7, Tuesday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she teaches about the monarch larva monitoring project and how you can become involved as a citizen scientist. Topics to be covered: Larva monitoring, tagging, rearing, etc.

 **2 points**

10:00 AM

Cost: registered volunteers

free, \$2.00/person all others

Pre-register by: 7/3/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Preschool Morning Adventure – Fun in the Sun

July 9, Thursday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she teaches about summer. We will talk about everything summer, read a book, make a cool craft, and enjoy a snack.



10:00 AM

Cost: \$3.00/child, \$2.00/adult

Pre-register by: 7/3/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Caving Adventure

July 16, Thursday (mandatory pre-caving class)

July 25, Saturday (trip to cave, all day)

Go underground with Allen County Parks. Caving instructor and naturalist Bob Dispenza will be leading a trip to a new cave (for us) near Springville on Saturday, July 25. We'll be exploring a wild cave in the area and going off the beaten path, looking for cave wildlife and unusual formations. Mandatory pre-caving class is Thursday, July 16, 7:30 PM at Metea County Park Visitor Center. Class fee covers maps and caving instruction. Learn about geology, cave life, needed equipment and cave formation. This activity is somewhat strenuous, but suitable for beginners in good physical condition.

7  **points**

7:30 PM

All Day

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 7/11/09

Min: 5

Max: 25



Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: bdispenza@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-8619

Bob Dispenza

Birds and Blooms of the Lake and Field

July 18, Saturday

Lots of great birds and flowers call Bowman Lake and our old field's home. Discover them on this 1 ½ mile stroll. Binoculars provided.

10:00 AM – Noon

Cost: \$ 2.00

Pre-register by: 7/13/09

Min: 5

Max: 15

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: rzartman@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3186

Ron Zartman

TREADS – Muskrat Trail

July 18, Saturday

Join Metea naturalist Karie Harding as she leads a hike down Muskrat Trail. This trail was hit with a lot of water during the flooding, We'll discuss the changes made by erosion, and find out how the flood impacted summer wildlife. **Insect repellent suggested.**

10:00 AM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 7/13/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Preschool Discovery Hour – Frogs and Toads

July 21, Tuesday

A short discovery session and story will be followed by a frog hunt and a snack.

1:00 – 2:00 PM

Cost: \$3.00 / child

\$2.00 / adult

Pre-register by: 7/16/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: rzartman@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3186

Ron Zartman

Zoomobile at Fox Isle

July 22, Wednesday

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley and the Fort Wayne Children's Zoomobile in a Reptile Romp in the swamp! Program in the nature center classrooms.

10:30AM

Cost: \$3.00/person

Pre-register by: 7/17/09

Min: 5

Max: 75

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Scrap-booking Series

July 24, Aug. 28, Sept. 25, Oct. 23 & Nov. 13, Fridays

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley in a scrap-booking evening of saving memories with Creative Memories Consultant, Sherina Hewson (www.mycmsite.com/sites/shewson). Bring a friend and catch up on each other's lives.

6:00 PM - Midnight!

Cost: \$10.00/person

Pre-register by: 7/19/09, 8/23/09, 9/20/09, 10/18/09, and 11/8/09.

Min: 6

Max: 20

Fox Island County Park

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Night of the Stinging Insects

July 24, Friday

Bees, wasps, hornets, yellowjackets – they’re everywhere and they’re after me! Or are they? Why do they sting? How? How many times? Where do they live? How do I keep them away? Learn the answers to these and other questions with Park and Education Manager Bob Dispenza. We’ll be spending some time outside, so have insect repellent handy.

2  points

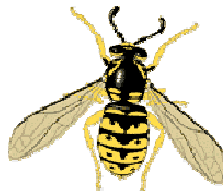
7:30 PM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 7/19/09

Min: 5

Max: 50



Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email:

bdispenza@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-8619

Bob Dispenza

Creek Hike at Cook’s Landing

July 28, Tuesday

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley at our picnic shelter for a hike along Cedar Creek! Your feet will get wet so bring old shoes. Flip-flops not recommended!

10:00AM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 7/23/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Cook’s Landing County Park

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Painted Prairie Hike

July 30, Thursday

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley on a picturesque prairie hike! Weather will be warm, so bring a water bottle with you!

11:00AM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 7/25/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Preschool Morning Adventure – 5 Senses

August 6, Thursday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she teaches about our 5 senses. We will read a book, make a craft, have a snack, and go outside and use our senses!

10:00 AM

Cost: \$3.00/child, \$2.00/adult

Pre-register by: 8/1/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

TREADS – Soft Shell Turtle Trail

August 15, Saturday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she leads a hike down Soft Shell Turtle Trail. Find out about the flora and fauna found in the park during this hike.

*Insect repellent suggested.**

10:00 AM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 8/10/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Preschool Discovery Hour – Turtle Tracks

August 18, Tuesday

Youngsters will meet our exhibit turtles, search for wild turtles at the wetland and have a snack.



1:00 – 2:00 PM

Cost: \$3.00/child \$2.00/adult

Pre-register by: 8/13/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: rztartman@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3186

Ron Zartman

Home School Series

August 20 & September 17, Thursdays

Home school science enrichment program for all school age students in three age groups. Includes BOTH month's sessions, all handouts and equipment. One parent/guardian per family is required to attend. Classes fill up quickly, so reserve you space. Classes begin at promptly 2:00 PM! Both sessions will be held both indoors and outdoors. Please dress for the weather.

 **2 NISTEM points per class**

2:00-4:00 pm

Cost: \$10.00/student

\$4.00/adult

Pre-register & PREPAY by:
8/15/09

Min: 5/age group

Max: 20

SPACE WILL NOT BE
RESERVED UNTIL YOU
HAVE PAID

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3777

Karie Harding

Session 1: August 20



Beginner (grade 1-3)

Insects

The beginner group will be learning about Insects during this session. They will take a hike through the prairie hopefully finding exciting insects like preying mantis, caterpillars, butterflies and more.

Intermediate (grade 4-6)

Insects

This is a more advanced class looking at insects, we will be using taxonomic keys to identify insects as well as investigate what it takes to be an insect.

Advanced (grade 7-12)

Insects

This is a more advanced class looking at insects, we will be using taxonomic keys to identify insects as well as investigate what it takes to be an insect.

Session 2: September 17



Tree ID

We will be hiking through the park figuring out the different kinds of trees can be found along the trails. We will use different ways to remember names, and will use a field guide to help us with the process.

Tree ID

This will be a more advanced hike through the nature preserve looking for trees, and using different tools to help us remember their names.

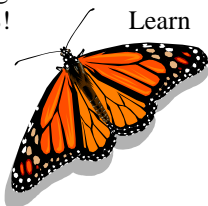
Tree ID

This will be a more advanced hike through the nature preserve looking for trees, and using different tools to help us remember their names.

Monarch Day

August 22, Saturday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she teaches about MONARCH BUTTERFLIES! Learn about migration, tagging, lifecycles, and much more as we play games, have a hike, and tag and release butterflies (how long will they stay on your nose?)



 **2 NISTEM points**

10:00 AM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 8/17/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Prairie Ramble

August 23, Sunday

Our restored prairie has a wide variety of local grasses and wildflowers.

1:00 – 3:30 PM

Cost: \$2.00

Pre-register by: 8/18/09

Min: 5

Max: 15

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: rzartman@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3186

Ron Zartman

Fall Trail Guide Training

August 30, Sunday

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley in the fall training of our volunteer trail guides. They will be learning about the history of Fox Island while enjoying the autumn fall color. Bring a friend and become a volunteer trail guide!

1:00 - 4:00PM

Cost: \$FREE

Pre-register by: 8/25/09

Min: 5

Max: 30

Fox Island County Park

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Dune Dig Historic Hike

September 1, Tuesday

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley on a hike along the Fox Island dune. Picture yourself as an American Indian, an army tank tester, or a tenant farmer and learn the history of our nature preserve wonder.

10:00AM

Cost: \$ 3.00/person

Pre-register by: 8/27/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Fox Island County Park

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Preschool Morning Adventure – An Apple a Day

September 10, Thursday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she teaches about apples. We will read a book, make a craft, have a snack and a taste test... which apple do you prefer?

10:00 AM

Cost: \$3.00/child, \$2.00/adult

Pre-register by: 9/5/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Special Event:

Potawatomi History, Identity, and Culture—The Past as it Relates to the Present

September 13, Sunday

Indiana was named after the Native people who lived here. Most of us are familiar with the past of Native Americans, but they still live and work among us today.

Learn about the past and present of our area Native Americans through presentations by representatives of the Pokagon Band of Potatomies and other local tribes.

2:00 – 5:00 PM

Cost: \$3.00/person

Pre-register by: N/A

Min: 15

Max: 100

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: bdispenza@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-8619

Bob Dispenza



TREADS – Butterfly Walk

September 19, Saturday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she leads a hike through the park focusing on the different kinds of butterflies – such as swallowtails, monarchs, sulfurs, cabbage whites, etc -- that can be found there.

10:00 AM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 9/14/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Preschool Discovery Hour – Butterflies

September 22, Tuesday

Explore the lives of butterflies, enjoy a story, search for them in our butterfly garden and have a snack.

1:00 – 2:00 PM

Cost: \$3.00/child \$2.00/adult

Pre-register by: 9/17/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: rzartman@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3186

Ron Zartman

Autumn Ice Cream Social

September 22, Tuesday

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley in a cool autumn celebration by making home-made ice cream!



6:00PM

Cost: \$3.00 per ice cream cone!

Pre-register by: 9/17/09

Min: 5

Max: I can always buy more ice cream!

Metea County Park

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Tai Chi

September 23 – Nov 18, Wednesdays

Instructor Sandy Gebhart will teach the Sun Short Form to novices and advance into the seventy three form with continuing students in this eight week Tai Chi class. The Sun Short Form is a gentle, non-strenuous form that can be practiced by all.

6:00 - 7:00 PM

Cost: \$50.00 for eight weeks

Pre-register by: 9/18/09

Min: 10

Max: 25

Special Note: Registrations accepted through 3rd week

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: rzartman@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3186

Ron Zartman

Back to Nature in Payton Park

September 24, Thursday

Join Allen County Park Educator, Natalie Haley and explore our 40 acre farm reverted back to nature!

 **2 points**

10AM

Cost: \$2.00

Pre-register by: 9/19/09

Min: 5 is recommended

Max: 30

Payton County Park

To register or more information:

Email: nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3246

Natalie Haley

Fourth Friday Night Hike

September 25, Friday

Join Metea naturalist, Karie Harding as she teaches about the night. We will talk about night animals, night senses, and other fun night things!



 **2 points**

7:30 PM

Cost: \$2.00/person

Pre-register by: 9/21/09

Min: 5

Max: 20

Metea County Park Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: kharding@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3778

Karie Harding

Glow in the Dark Hike

September 26, Saturday

Join Naturalist Ron Zartman to search for glowworms and bioluminescent mushrooms. No flashlights to preserve night vision.

 **2 points**

8:00 – 9:30 PM

Cost: \$2.00

Pre-register by: 9/21/09

Min: 5

Max: 15

Fox Island Nature Center

To register or more information:

Email: rzartman@allencountyparks.org

Call: 449-3186

Ron Zartman

Allen County does not discriminate because of disability in the admission to, treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. The Human Resources director has been designated to coordinate compliance with nondiscrimination requirements contained in Section 35.107 of the Department of Justice regulations. Information concerning the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided thereafter, and Allen County's ADA Policy are available from the ADA Coordinator. Requests for assistance or suggestions on how the County can better meet the needs of those persons with disabilities may be submitted to the ADA Coordinator at: Human Resources Department, Room 208, 1 East Main Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802, or by telephone at 260-449-7217, TDD 260-449-7881.

Our Mission: "To establish and manage a permanent park system incorporating conservation, education, outdoor values and nature preservation, and to provide recreational opportunities for the people of Allen County within this structure."

Allen County


7324 Yohne Rd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46809
260.449.3180
fax 260.449.3181

We're on the web: www.allencountyparks.org