2022 A Year in Review!

It’s said every year, but somehow 2022 has come to an end and 2023 is here! In many ways 2022 felt like the beginning of a return to normal. As the world opened again, a lot of our beloved programs and special events made a grand return! We were able to gather in person again and see so many of you at our various volunteer meetings and annual celebration event.

Despite all of the challenges we have faced the last few years, the amazing support that volunteers have for Great Parks has been constant. Here are just a few things volunteers and staff accomplished this year, while working together:

- Removed at least 948 bags of trash, 85 bags of recycling, and 33 tires from park lands and around waterways, which positively affects the water quality not only in our parks, but also all the streams and rivers which make their way to the Mississippi River and down to the Gulf of Mexico! Never forget, it’s all connected!
- Planted 2926 trees and shrubs, leading to better habitat for local wildlife, increased shaded areas for park guests, and less mowing for staff which means saving funds, using less gas, and less warming for the entire PLANET!!
- Walked, monitored, and improved over 72 miles of trail by removing 76 water bars and installing other sustainable measures. This means less erosion on the trails, less maintenance for our staff and safer trails for guests.
- Removed 19.5 acres of invasive plants, making room for native plants to grow which results in better food sources and overall habitat for native wildlife.
- Harvested buckets and buckets of native seeds at the Shaker Trace Nursery, so that we can continue to create new habitats and sustain the old with local plant genotypes.
- Spread 65 cubic yards of mulch, which helps plants retain moisture, contributes to our water conservation efforts, and provides appealing outdoor spaces for park guests to enjoy.
- Helped bring Kid’s Expo back and engaged over 3,000 people from the local community, schools, and camps in outdoor education & recreation.
- Saw the beginning of our Holidays on the Farm event, 29 of you braved the cold weather to bring smiles to thousands of our guests this holiday season.
- Welcomed 88 new long-term volunteers to the team!
- Contributed over 26,800 hours of service to Great Parks!

These numbers show us just a glimpse of some of the amazing things that were accomplished by volunteers this year. We know there are so many more moments that simply can’t be quantified. So, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you for all that you have done to support Great Parks throughout 2022. We are so excited to see what 2023 will bring!

Sincerely,
Kris, Lauren and Joe
Reminder!
Please make sure to RSVP for a project and event before attending. If you can no longer make it, reach out to the staff leading the event to let them know. Every project and event listed will have the contact info of the staff person leading the project.

Invasive Removal at Fernbank
Thu 2/2, 9 – 11 a.m.
Think about your favorite part of a hike—is it the wildlife, the peaceful calm of the woods, the fresh air? Maybe it’s birdwatching or seeing some nice spring wildflowers? Invasive species threaten all of this! Invasives like honeysuckle, winter creeper, and garlic mustard aggressively outcompete native wildflowers, trees, and other native plants. Come help us tackle invasives at Fernbank and keep our trails great for generations to come! Meet at Sycamore Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up.

Great Parks Forever Valentines Mailing at Sharon Woods
Thu 2/2, 9 a.m. – noon
Great Parks, our philanthropic partner, is looking for some help for a super-sized mailing project! This mailing is an important tool to raise money for Great Parks. We plan to reach nearly 2,700 known constituents. Approximately 2,700 envelopes need to be stuffed! Meet at Sharon Woods Auditorium. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Elisheba Hawkins at ehawkins@greatparks.org or phone 513-245-7444. For volunteers ages 18 and up.

Annual Winter Hike Series
Sat 2/4, 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
The Annual Winter Hike Series is back for 2023! This is one of our most popular programs of the year and we’d love to have your help for one, several or the whole series. Whether you are interested in leading a group, being follow-up support, or lending a hand serving soup, we need you! Please note that this is an entirely outdoor event, and hikes...
range between 4-5.5 miles over uneven terrain. Some hikes are more challenging than others and are almost never canceled due to the weather, so be prepared for cold, snow, and rain. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Suzanne Roth at sroth@greatparks.org or phone 513-385-0075. For volunteers ages 18 and up. Winter Hike–Park Name [Edu & Events]

Hikes start at 10 a.m. Volunteers must be present for a 9:30 pre-hike meeting.

River Cleanup at Miami Whitewater
Sun 2/5, 9 – 11 a.m.
Help us take care of some trash along the Miami Whitewater Corridor and explore a rarely seen part of park property! This area is a beautiful section of the river but unfortunately trash often finds itself washed upon the shore. Come help us remove the trash and debris. Expect vines, uneven terrain, and other obstacles. Brave volunteers who wish to accept this task are advised to wear sturdy shoes, gloves, and clothes they don’t mind getting dirty. Meet at the Welch Property Drive (8291 East Miami River Road). To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact AJ Norton at anorton@greatparks.org or phone 513-910-5067. For volunteers ages 18 and up. Stew Crew–Miami Whitewater [C&P/West]

Litter Pickup at Woodland Mound
Mon 2/6, 10 a.m. – noon
We need your help to keep our parks free of litter! Come out to Steamboat Bend and assist us in picking up trash that washes up from the Ohio River. Litter grabbers and supplies will be provided. Meet at the Steamboat Bend parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Elissa Oliveira at eoliveira@greatparks.org or by phone 513-673-1102. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Woodland Mound [C&P/East]

Brower Road Cleanup at Shawnee Lookout
Wed 2/8, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Please join us for hot coffee, cocoa, and natural stewardship! Lawrenceburg/Brower Road is heavily traveled and follows the perimeter of the park. Much of the litter along the roadside ends up in some of our most sensitive habitats and eventually into the Great Miami and Ohio Rivers during flood events. We would like your help in removing the litter and recyclables to help protect our waterways. Visibility vests will be provided. Meet at the Shawnee Lookout boat ramp on Lawrenceburg Rd across from the Ranger Station. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Alex Hearing at ahearing@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Shawnee Lookout [C&P/West]

Invasive Removal at Sharon Woods
Wed 2/8, noon – 2 p.m.
Come out to Sharon Woods to help remove invasive shrub species from the parcours trail. Also learn about what invasive plants could be present in your backyards and how to properly remove them. Meet at the Highbanks parking lot by the dam. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jessica Blaha at jblaha@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Sharon Woods [C&P/East]

Honeysuckle Removal at Winton Woods
Fri 2/10, noon – 2 p.m.
Honeysuckle takes up a lot of space in our forest understory where native species could grow – it also keeps us from getting a great view of the forest! We will be removing this invasive plant along the Kingfisher trail for both the ecosystem and humans alike. Grab a jacket and let’s get cutting! Meet at the Kingfisher Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hayley Miner at hminer@greatparks.org or phone 513-340-8033. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Winton Woods [C&P/Central]

Things That Bark & Howl at Sharon Woods
Fri 2/10, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Help our guests learn about man’s best friend and their native relatives (both living and extinct). During this program, volunteers will assist in showing guests different taxidermy such as skulls and pelts. Meet at the Sharon Centre. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact James Harris at jharris@greatparks.org or phone 216-702-1766. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Interpreter Programs–Sharon Woods [Edu & Events/East]

Valentine’s Bash at Woodland Mound
Sat 2/11, 1 – 3:30 p.m.
Join us for an afternoon of fun with games, crafts, and other activities for the whole family! Guests will meet some of our lovable animal ambassadors, make some Valentines, and learn how some animals show their love to each other. Volunteers will help guests with crafts as needed, keep craft areas relatively clean, and help guests with the Andromeda story costumes. Meet at the Seasongood Nature Center. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Lisa Salehpour at ssalehpour@greatparks.org or phone 513-289-6609. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Interpreter Programs–Woodland Mound [Edu & Events/East]

Valentine’s Day Invasive Removal at Farbach-Werner
Tue 2/14, 9 – 11:30 a.m.
Show your love for the parks this Valentine’s Day by joining us for an invasive plant removal! Farbach-Werner is
Invasive Removal at Sharon Woods
Wed 2/15, noon – 2 p.m.
Come out to Sharon Woods to help remove invasive shrub species from the parcourse trail. Also learn about what invasive plants could be present in your backyards and how to properly remove them. Meet at the Highbanks parking lot by the dam. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Farbach-Werner [C&P/Central]

Invasive Removal at Fernbank
Thu 2/16, 9 – 11 a.m.
Think about your favorite part of a hike—is it the wildlife, the peaceful calm of the woods, the fresh air? Maybe it’s birdwatching or seeing some nice spring wildflowers? Invasive species threaten all of this! Invasives like honeysuckle, winter creeper, and garlic mustard aggressively outcompete native wildflowers, trees, and other native plants. Come help us tackle invasives at Fernbank and keep our trails great for generations to come! Meet at Sycamore Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Sharon Woods [C&P/Central]

Vine Clearing at Werk Road
Sat 2/18, 9 a.m. – noon
Come check out one of the latest park additions and better the area in the process! Winter creeper and porcelain berry are highly invasive, choking vines that are taking over in some areas of the park. Help us clear the area and create space for native species to grow! Meet at Werk Road property (2918 Werk Rd.). There are no parking spaces available so park on McKinley Avenue and walk in to meet at the old barn. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Werk Rd [C&P/Central]

Brush Removal at Embshoff Woods
Wed 2/22, 9 a.m. – noon
Did you know that there’s more than 300 acres of green space tucked away in Delhi? Embshoff Woods Nature Preserve was opened back in 1982 and was formerly a horse farm. Now it’s home to several picnic shelters, a disc golf course, and a parcourse trail. Come visit us and help clean up the area while you’re here! We will be clearing brush, woody debris, and invasive species from a few areas. Meet at Mossycup Hill Shelter. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew–Embshoff Woods [C&P/Central]

Honeysuckle Removal at Winton Woods
Fri 2/24, noon – 2 p.m.
Come help us clear the Kingfisher Trail of honeysuckle. Our goal is to create a better hiking experience for everyone by removing this invasive plant. We will be creating space for native species to grow up in place of honeysuckle.

The Purr-fect Seminar at Sharon Woods
Fri 2/17, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Help our guests learn about their purr-fect pets and their native relatives (both living and extinct). During this program, volunteers will assist in showing guests different taxidermy such as skulls and pelts. Meet at the Sharon Centre. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact James Harris at jharris@greatparks.org
what we cut. Meet at the Kingfisher Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hayley Miner at hminer@greatparks.org or phone 513-340-8033. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Stew Crew—Winton Woods [C&P/Central]**

**The Musty Mustelids: A Seminar on Weasels & Their Relatives at Sharon Woods**
Fri 2/24, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
You can’t weasel your way out of this talk! If you’re a ferret lover, head over to Sharon Woods and help our guests learn about ferrets’ closest relatives that live in Ohio. During this program, volunteers will assist in showing guests different taxidermy such as skulls and pelts. Meet at the Sharon Centre. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact James Harris at jharris@greatparks.org or phone 216-702-1766. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Interpreter Programs—Sharon Woods [Edu & Events/East]**

**Maple Sugar Days at Farbach-Werner**
Sat 2/25 & Sun 2/26, 11:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.
It’s maple sugaring time! This event for the whole family celebrates the awakening of the trees as they prepare for spring with the very traditional craft of making maple syrup. Enjoy this delicious weekend of tastes, crafts, demonstrations, and hikes. Tasks include assisting with maple syrup boiling, following up on hikes, serving food and interacting with guests at educational stations and activities. Meet at the Ellenwood Nature Barn. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Stephanie Morris at smorris@greatparks.org or phone 513-385-4811. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Interpreter Programs—Farbach-Werner [Edu & Events/Central]**

**Invasive Plant Removal at Withrow Nature Preserve**
Mon 2/27, noon – 2 p.m.
Come out to Withrow Nature Preserve and assist in removal of invasive species. Invasive species are a threat to the ecosystem by diminishing biodiversity and taking away resources from native species. This also provides an opportunity to learn about what invasive plants that could be present in your own backyards and how to properly treat them. We will be removing invasive species on our Trout Lily Trail. Meet at the Withrow parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Elissa Oliveira at eoliveira@greatparks.org or by phone 513-673-1102. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Stew Crew—Withrow [C&P/East]**

**Pear Tree Cut & Haul at Miami Whitewater Forest**
Tue 2/28, noon – 2 p.m.
Removal of invasive species is a constant job for the parks, and prescribed burns is one way we control these non-native plant invaders. This year Conservation and Parks is hoping to burn and cut a large prairie on the north end of Miami Whitewater. Your help is needed cutting woody honeysuckle and pear trees, applying herbicide to stumps will prevent regrowth, and loading cut pear trees into pickup trucks for disposal. Meet at the Shaker Building parking lot (11347 Oxford Road). To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact AJ Norton at anorton@greatparks.org or phone 513-910-5067. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Stew Crew—Miami Whitewater [C&P/West]**

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**Project Update: The Music Garden at Glenwood**

The new Music Garden at Highfield Discovery Garden is now open! Come make musical discoveries – children can have an impromptu performance on the stage and play large instruments. We’re excited to see how guests enjoy the Music Garden.

We will have a grand opening celebration in the spring, once the new plantings have been installed. The addition of this new themed area is sure to inspire future generations of gardeners and musicians!

greatparks.org/volunteer
Shout Outs

With our inaugural Holidays on the Farm event now over, we’d like to thank all the volunteers who helped make the event a success! Whether you were stamping Reindeer Round-up games at Santaland or keeping watch at the Woodlot Trail entrance, we are thankful for your time. We can’t wait to continue this event for futures years!

A BIG thank you to:

Mia Baldridge  
Henry Bernay  
Sandy Bleau  
Jody Bosse  
Christine Bruewer  
Dan Bruewer  
Tracy Brumett  
Shelly Cain  
April Cook  
Diana D’Amico  
Teresa Dransman  
Steve Dressing  
Stan Espelage  
Ronda Glassmeyer  
Lin Huelsman  
Dawn Johnson  
Donna Lanter  
Kyra Lewis  
Gary Lord  
Paige MacMorland  
Nancy Martin  
Megan Prewitt  
Jennifer Querner  
Melinda Reilly  
Em Rhodes  
Susan Robinson  
Kaye Schallick  
Louise Schurfranz  
Greg Voorhies

—Jamie Piccola & Mary Anneken, Special Event Coordinators

On Sunday, 12/18 a hardy group of volunteers (pictured left) braved the cold temperatures to plant trees along a stretch of a decommissioned trail at Miami Whitewater Forest. This was done to bring this section back to a natural state. Under the guidance of employees AJ Norton, this group planted 34 trees in two hours! Thank you so much!

Well, we have another volunteer project in the books. We spent 3 hours picking up trash along Sheffield Road and collected 12 bags of trash. Thank you to Angie Wasson, Erich Baumgardner, Kelly Kern, Lisa Neumeier, and John Martens for putting in the time with Great Parks as a volunteer.

—Shaun McClary, Glenwood Gardens  
Conservation & Parks Technician