

# HIKE-BIKE TRAIL HUDSON MILLS METROPARK



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# HIKE-BIKE TRAIL GUIDE STOPS

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## HIKE SUGGESTIONS

1. Listen for animals like the Chick-a-dee (chick a dee-dee-dee), Nuthatch (yank-yank), Tufted Titmouse (peter-peter-peter), and Squirrel chatter.
2. Look for tracks, scat, tree holes, nests, tunnels, and other signs of wildlife.





## 1. DISC GOLF BASKETS

Kevin Donnelly, began playing a form of frisbee golf in 1959. He organized tournaments with rules, hole lengths, pars, penalties and hula hoop holes. "Steady Ed" Headrick, regarded as the "Father of Disc Golf", created a controllable disc as well as the first target with chains and a pole basket. Hudson Mills has 2 courses, the Original and Monster. Want to try this sport? Rent some discs at the park office.



## 2. PAPER BIRCH

Look for a single tree with white, paper-like bark. The bark of this tree played a part in Michigan's history and was used to make canoes that were relatively light and easy to maneuver, some up to 36 feet long. They were used to transport trade goods like iron tools, wool blankets, colorful cloth, and furs (otter, lynx, marten & beaver). Goods were handled at forts like Fort Pontchartrain, now Detroit.



## 3. MEADOW VIEW

Relax and enjoy the views overlooking Oak Meadows. In the summer this field is coated in light pink Wild Bergamot blooms and if you're lucky, you might catch site of a Massasauga Rattlesnake. These threatened animals use fields like this in the summer, catching rodents to eat, and then move to wetlands in the fall where they hibernate in crayfish burrows.



## 4. RAPIDS VIEW

The Huron River begins its 130 mile journey in the Huron Swamp north of Indian Springs Metropark. It winds through Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, Wayne and Monroe Counties, ending at Lake Erie. Here at Hudson Mills Metropark, the water tumbles over the rocks, creating homes for fish, turtles, frogs, snakes, beaver, and insects. Listen to the water gurgle. Can you find life in the Huron River?



## 5. BRIDGE OVER HURON RIVER

Welcome to Bloodroot Island. Bloodroot is a small white wildflower that blooms in spring. Native Americans used the red juice from its stem and leaf as dye and to repel insects. Please take photos only and let it grow. At this point on the trail, the river splits around the island. When the river is high the land around you floods. Look for wildflowers and signs of animals as you walk across this little island.



## 6. BEAVER CHEWS

Do you see any logs with ends chewed into points? Beavers are active in this area and were hunted for their fur to near extinction. They alter their environment by creating new habitats for plants and animals that rely on them. Felled trees allow turtles to bask and sunlight to reach plants that cannot endure shade, letting them grow to provide new foods for animals. Succession of habitats begins.



Belted Kingfisher

## 7. RIVER VIEW: KINGFISHER SEARCH

Stop and listen for the movement of water. You may get a chance to hear the rattling call of the Belted Kingfisher. Search the trees along the banks of the river for a large blue/gray bird with an oversized head. Females have a chestnut colored belly band. This bird patrols the river, diving into the water to catch fish and crayfish. They excavate a three to six foot tunnel into the bank to use as a nesting site.



Basswood

## 8. RIVER VIEW: BASSWOOD BRANCHES

A short walk from the trail, this is a quiet, relaxing site to take a break. Watch the flow of water and look for fish or birds swimming in the water. On land you may notice a small tree with large, red winter buds. This is a Basswood Tree. These trees make for nice shade trees in the summer. Native Americans would cut thin strips of the inner bark to use for rope and mats.



Glowworms

## 9. LAST CHANCE RIVER VIEW

As the trail winds around the park, take this chance to view the river one last time. In late summer, just after dusk you'll notice glowing spots on the ground. Take a closer look and you'll find glowworms (firefly larvae) hunting. You'll also notice bats flying along the river eating insects emerging from the water. Look for our night hike programs to witness these fun animal activities.



Staghorn Sumac

## 10. STAGHORN SUMAC

When you look to the edge of the woods, you'll notice an understory of small, twisty trees. Can you find the upright cluster of red fruit? Look closer and you'll see the stems are fuzzy, resembling the velvet antlers of deer. These small trees are called Staghorn Sumac. Enjoy a walk in the fall to see the leaves turn a beautiful deep red color.



Norway Spruce

## 11. BREAK UNDER THE NORWAY SPRUCE

Stop and enjoy the drooping branches of these Norway Spruce trees. These non-native trees are often planted as wind breaks, screens and hedges. Sit on the bench and look up to see if you can find their hanging cones. If you look to the ground, you may see some cones that have been chewed by squirrels searching for seeds.



Nesting Box

## 12. BLUEBIRD BOXES

These boxes are here to aid Eastern Bluebirds in their nesting. Their populations started declining when aggressive, non-native European Starlings and House Sparrows were introduced to the U.S., competing for nesting cavities. The boxes alleviated much of the nesting competition, helping the bluebird population recover. Look for birds with bright blue backs and rusty throats and breasts.



Sugar Maple Trees

## 13. SUGAR BUSH VIEW

As you walk and look out into the field, you might notice many trees that are the same height. They all have the same shape to their crown as well. These trees are Sugar Maples and were planted for their fall color. Look for their beautiful fiery yellow or red colors in fall. A Sugar Bush is a group of sugar maples growing together.

Join us in March during our Journey to the Sugar Bush programs as we tap sugar maples to obtain the sweet sap we boil into maple syrup.

## TRAIL INFO:

With a historic river meandering through its 1,549 acres, Hudson Mills Metropark is located on North Territorial Road, 12 miles northwest of Ann Arbor. The gentle rapids area is one of the river's most picturesque spots, which is also frequented by bass anglers and picnickers. The park trails give easy access to the marriage of serene woods and waters.

**Pets:** Dogs and other pets are permitted in the parks only when kept on a six foot (or less) leash. Pets are not permitted in the nature areas, buildings, on cross-country ski trails or the golf course.

### Hudson Mills Metropark

8801 N. Territorial Road

Dexter, MI 48130

734.426.8211

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