

# Story Book Trails



- Summit Metro Parks
- Story Book Trails
- Leaders/Managers: SMP interpretive staff, Meghan Doran, Demetrius Falconer & Mike Greene
- Type:
  - “Pop up”
  - Education
- During COVID-19 pandemic how do we engage visitors? We developed a variety of self-guided activities on our trails throughout the park district and it served hundreds of visitors.
- 2020

County: Summit

General Information



Provide contact information in case we need to contact you about this program.

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# Story Book Trails



**Participants:** Children, adults and anyone in the parks, estimated use was approximately 20,000

**Locations:**

Cascade Valley Metro Park, Overlook Trail – April  
Deep Lock Quarry, Quarry Trail – June

Wood Hollow Metro Park, Downy Loop - August  
Munroe Falls Metro Park, Meadow Trail – September

Furnace Run Metro Park, Rock Creek Trail – October

**AND MORE!**

**Program frequency:** Up for the entire month

**Other:** A few key points to highlight:

- Addresses a multicultural perspective
- Travels to varying locations around the park district

-Addresses the need to continuously connect with our patrons in a safe manner during the

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Additional Information



# Story Book Trails

**TRAILSIDE EYE SPY**  
Check off each item as you see it along Quarry Trail in Deep Lock Quarry Metro Park, 5779 Riverview Rd., Peninsula, OH 44264

**QUARRY STOPS**  
Beginning in 1920, the quarry provided the local building blocks of Akron and surrounding communities via the Ohio and Erie Canal. By 1962, CCC crews were the last to remove stone, some of which can be found in park structures such as Burnham Lodge at Furnace Run Metro Park.

**MILESTONES**  
The sandstone here had a fine texture that was perfect for making millstones for food processing and grinding for metalworking. The quarry also produced flint, which were the stones used for arrowheads. How many of these items can you find along the trail?

**DEEP LOCK**  
This stop along the canal was able to raise and lower canal levels. It had some of the original concrete blocks, some dated with concrete in the early 1920s in a last-ditch effort to fix the falling canal system.

**LOGS**  
These strange log-shaped objects are the result of a symbiotic relationship between fungi and algae - fungi provide the structure and algae photosynthesize. Lichens can tolerate barren landscapes like stone and serve in a variety of interesting shapes and colors.

**MYSTERY STONES**  
Take a look at the back of some at your feet as you stroll on the quarry steps. These were originally shaped to support the bridge along the trail at Virginia Branch Lake. The project was carried out using wooden beams instead, leaving behind these remnants.

**INDIANBERRY TREE**  
Did you know that our trees were historically used for the bark of wattle fences? (Wattle is a type of woven fence made from branches and twigs.) Look for these trees along the trail and be on the lookout for their ribbon-shaped leaves.

**INDIANBERRY TREE**  
Look for these vibrant red berries with long stems at the quarry over the year. The particular spirit of our trail is a variety of local birds. Many at the quarry in 1920, when park before Deep Lock Quarry opened at a Metro Park. What do you think the birds symbolize?

**EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL**  
Look for these squirrels scurrying up trees and on the Furnace Run, jiggling up the list of their acorns. Whether they begin to dig up could grow into the oak trees of the future, allowing nature to continue for reclamation of Deep Lock Quarry.

**PIE-BLIND WOODPECKER**  
Look for the large black holes, bold white wing patches and distinct red crown of this largest woodpecker. Don't see the bird? Not to worry, they leave evidence in the form of fine holes, sometimes greater than six inches high and three inches wide!

Summit Metro Parks

- **Unique!**
- **Benefits, Goals and Results:** Anyone could enjoy mindfulness, nature facts and eye-spy games at various parks in Summit Co. Trails chosen were easy and accessible for those who need to enjoy the activities in a stroller or wheelchair.
- **Transferability:** Many of the stories could be used at other parks and were during 2020. To give an opportunity for visitors at other locations in the county – Firestone, Silver Creek and Goodyear Heights Metro Parks.
- **Other:** Very popular that we have continued the program into 2021!

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# Story Book Trails

**What People Are Saying:** Storybook trails became a popular program during the pandemic, especially because many families were out of school and learning from home. Topics ranged from turkey vultures to stomping in the snow. Over the last year, there were 7 successful story trails. Many times, visitors would email or use social media to show their appreciation:

*"My wife and I just finished the fall hiking spree. There was a nice selection of trails. I always read the postings along the trails. We particularly enjoyed the "Leaf Man" signs on the Downy Loop Trail. Congrats to whoever thought of that idea. Very entertaining. Wish the grandkids were with us."*

*"I just want to thank whoever for the "Day of the Dead" story at Furnace Run. I took my 9-year-old twin granddaughters to the trail. They took turns reading the pages and we discussed that Mexican tradition (as well as the nature around us!). What fun!"*

*Please please please repeat the Bird Humor Hike!!! I have loved all these self-guided hikes, thank you sooooo much for offering these events :). Such a fabulous idea!! Somehow I missed this week's trail, so sad :( Looking forward to the Raptor Trail this week.*

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Feedback & Comments



# Story Book Trails



**Budget:** Total budget less than \$700  
**Future:** Self-guided activities were so successful in Summit Metro Parks that the staff is continuing to plan these opportunities for visitors in the future, despite our return to in-person programming. When so many people around the world have questioned the new normal, the interpretive staff at SMP will continue to adapt to these unprecedented times!

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Other Information

