



What a fall! A wet October has followed a wet September. For the first three weeks of October, Central Ohio's average rainfall is ~1.6. We have had 2.72" of rain. The average precipitation for Central Ohio from January 1 to October 20 is 35.3"... we have had 39.38". If Mother Nature sends enough rain to go over 40", 2011 will achieve the status of being in the Top 10 of wettest years of recorded weather history.

Our first annual Breakfast with the Bison was enjoyed by 51 brave souls who ventured out into the windy, chilly Battelle Darby prairie to break bread (and pastries) with Big Mama and her ladies. Welcome to our 15 new members... our numbers are growing! Many thanks to Metro Parks naturalist Christy Ahnmark who shared stories and answered questions about the bison, the prairie and anything else that came to mind, and to Ranger Kevin Tschantz who gently guided the herd over to the fence so that we could enjoy an up-close experience with the bison as we sipped on hot chocolate, cider and ate pastries and apples. Look for announcements of other events that showcase the animals, plants and ecosystems of the Metro Parks on the Stewards Facebook page and in *The Sassafras Leaf*.

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Stewards-of-Metro-Parks/136934279702492>



photo by Debra Knapke

The Nature Center Groundbreaking Ceremony at Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park was Tuesday, November 1. The Nature Center is scheduled to open September of 2012, so there will be a lot of change in a short time. Visit often to see the rising of Metro Parks' newest nature center... and the bison, too. To get directions to and see a map of Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park, please visit:

<http://www.metroparks.net/MapBattelle.aspx>



photo by Keith DeVoe

The 1st Over the Bridge Event on October 1st was blustery and cold, but there were many stalwart runners, walkers and bicyclists that braved the weather to get a t-shirt and be among the first to walk over the Route 33 bridge that connects the trails between Three Creeks and Pickerington Ponds Metro Parks. Welcome to the 44 new members who joined the Stewards as a part of this event.

Garden Tip: Garden Prep: Now is the time to think about creating new garden beds so they can “cook” over the winter. Sheet mulching - also called lasagna gardening, a term popularized by author Patricia Lanza -- is a technique that uses newspapers, cardboard, leaves, grass clippings and more to create garden without tilling. Your last grass mowing will be soon -- consider using lawn-mower- mulched leaves combined with grass clippings as one of the layers for your sheet mulched garden. Planting bulbs: It's been wet so be careful that you are not compacting the soil as you plant bulbs in the garden. Consider adding our native *Atlantic camas* (*Camassia scilloides*) to your beds. It is a member of the lily family and is usually not eaten by squirrels, chipmunks and other bulb foraging animals. It prefers a sunny spot while in active growth, April to early June, and moist soil. It is difficult to find bulbs, but seed is available from many suppliers.



photo by Teena Ligman, <http://www.fs.fed.us/>

Touch a Park! Stewards of Metro Parks supports and furthers the work of our Metro Parks
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