

Parks and Recreation



Welcome to Addison Township

An attractive area with diverse topographical character.

Our low impact and low maintenance nature parks assist in preserving the rural atmosphere and special natural areas while providing open space.

The wetlands serve as a filter to regenerate our underground water supply.

Come experience that "UP NORTH" feeling, just minutes from home.

Township Parks

Our community owns four parks which are all worth visiting.

1. **Addison Township Park** is located on the east side of our Township Office Complex. It features a walking track, pickleball courts, basketball, volleyball, playground equipment and fun for visitors of all ages.
2. **Labodie Park** is seven acres that can found directly behind our Township Offices. It has a nice baseball field, sledding hill, gas fire pit and picnic table areas. Just south of the park is the Michigan Nature Association's Lakeville Swamp.
3. **Watershed Preserve Park** is 231 acres located approximately one mile north of Leonard Village on Rochester Road. It features a large marked trail system for hiking. There is much to see in this park abundant in natural plant and wildlife.
4. **Lake George Nature Park** is 82 acres located a little west of Leonard Village. Acquired in 2011, it is being developed similar to Watershed Preserve Park. It has picnic areas, a trail system and a dock for fishing. This park will suit those interested in woods, rustic trails and fishing.



2025 Park Committee Meetings

Conducted the first Monday of the month at 7:30pm.

We would like to raise community interest in our parks. Residents are welcome to attend our monthly informal Park and Recreation Committee meetings and let us know what you would like our parks to provide. We invite you to share ideas and become involved. Also, please ask for information if you have interest in becoming a Park Ranger or a "Volunteer and Friend of the Addison Township Parks and Recreation," where you will be notified of future park events and work days.

Dec. – May at the **ADDISON TOWNSHIP COMPLEX**, 1440 Rochester Rd.
 April 7, 2025 May 5, 2025
 December 1, 2025 January 5, 2026 February 2, 2026 March 2, 2026

June – November at the **ARNOLD SCHOOLHOUSE**, 5757 Rochester Rd.
 June 2, 2025 July 7, 2025 August 4, 2025
 September 8, 2025 October 6, 2025 November 3, 2025

Parks & Recreation Committee

Co-Chairman Rod Blaszyk
 Co-Chairman Chuck Peringian
 Dave Kostick
 Tom Podsiadlik

Park Rangers

Rod Blaszyk	John Phelan
Chuck Peringian	Leslie Knitter
Dave Kostick	Chris Podsiadlik
Tom Podsiadlik	Chase Skipinski
Art Burny	Marie Burchi- Skipinski
Jim Fitzpatrick	Michelle Litkouhi
Paul Ubelhor	Ed Durant
Laura Ubelhor	Bill Carroll
Stephany Boegner	Dave Misch

A Day on Lake George with Our Feathered Friends

By Chase Skipinski

Catch and Release Fishing, improves the native fish population in our parks lakes by allowing more fish to remain and reproduce in the ecosystem. This practice provides the opportunity for increasing numbers of anglers to enjoy fishing and to successfully catch fish in our parks lakes. Releasing fish, especially northern pike and large mouth bass will ensure that enjoyment of this recreational opportunity in Addison Townships nature parks for generations to come.

Visit Lake George Nature Park and the individual sounds of the many species of songbirds that call this Wetland Nature Preserve home perfectly mesh into a harmony. Looking up at the mature oak and white pine trees, orange Baltimore Oriole's and bright red Cardinals fly from limb to limb; their exotic colors almost suggesting that you are about to enter a tropical jungle.

Today however, the focus is with our feathered friends that prefer the cool waters of the lake. Carrying your kayak down the trail leading to the newly constructed fishing pier, the view out of the trees opens up to resemble something from a post card. Frogs chirp and leap, a painted turtle works on its suntan from atop a fallen tree, and you hear the first of the lakes many birds singing.

A male Red-winged Blackbird, singing his song not to serenade his mate with her streaked brown feathers, but rather, to defend the home that he's built in the cattails. Red-winged Blackbirds travel home to Michigan from southern states, and Central America in flocks of up to 10,000 birds (Tekiela 29)! He quickly swoops by to keep an eye on you as you approach the water's edge.

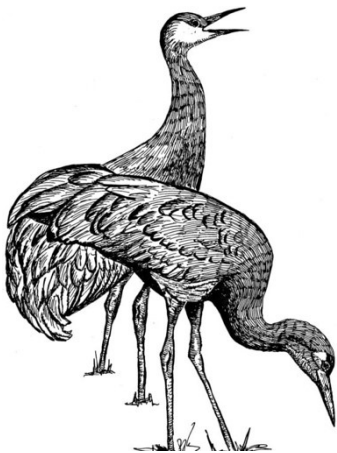
Once in the water you paddle away from shore through lily pads teaming with pollinators stopping by to smell the flowers. It's here that we spot the next of the lake's birds, a pterodactyl. Don't panic! It's not actually a prehistoric flying reptile, it is however a Great Blue Heron!

The Great Blue Heron is the tallest and most common heron in Michigan, easy to spot by its grey-blue feathers, orange bill, and nearly four-foot height. Not unlike the pterodactyl, this bird eats nearly anything that crosses its path; such as mice, frogs, snakes, and even squirrels (Tekiela 239).

While watching the Heron a shrieking rattle sound comes from across the lake where a Sandhill Crane, another giant wetland bird, takes flight upon spotting you. A Sandhill Crane can fly at heights greater than 10,000 feet (Tekiela 241).

A few hours pass and you are able to watch several small black and white Bufflehead Ducks diving for a snack of aquatic insects. As you paddle back towards the fishing pier to end your visit, a family of 10 Mallard Ducklings swim by accompanied by their mom. The Male Mallards return to their birthplace every year (Tekiela 249). Fortunately for these Mallards, Addison Township and its partners have made it a priority to preserve their beautiful home forever.

As many of our Oakland County neighbors prioritize growth and development, let's all take the time to appreciate Addison Township and all of the time and effort that goes into preserving and maintaining its many wetlands and natural areas. It is through these preservation efforts that we can all enjoy days on the lake with our feathered friends for many more years to come.



Stan Tekiela. *Birds of Michigan Field Guide*. 3rd Edition. Cambridge, Minnesota. Adventure Publications; 2019.

Exploring Watershed Preserve Nature Park – A Hikers Guide

By Tom Podsiadlik

*Chickweed is a hardy
creeping plant that
stays green even
under snow.*

*It's packed with
vitamins C, D, B6,
B12, beta carotene,
and essential minerals
like iron, calcium, and
magnesium.*

Uses:

Tea: *Mildly diuretic
when steeped.*

Herbal Compress:
*Apply chopped
chickweed with water
or oil to soothe rashes,
burns, or minor
wounds. Mixing it with
clay enhances
absorption.*

Recipe Ideas:

*Add to salads or
creamed soups
(last 3-5 minutes of
cooking).*

*Blend with chives,
onion, and cream
cheese and spread on
crackers or bread.*



Enjoy the beauty of nature by hiking the trails of Watershed Park. The park spans 231 acres of protected land, dedicated to preserving the natural and ecological integrity of the area. The park offers diverse landscape including dense woodlands, open meadows and four kettle lakes with their inter-connected wetlands within rolling glacial moraine deposits. It is a haven for wildlife, making it an ideal spot for bird watching, photography, and quiet reflection in nature.

The park consists of two main areas, Watershed East and Watershed West, divided by Slating and Howard Lakes. Watershed East is located on Rochester Road approximately 1.25 miles north of Leonard Village. Watershed West is located on the East side of Havens Road, just south of the Lapeer County border. Both parks have hiking trails but for this article, we will explore Watershed East only, as it has a more extensive network of trails.

Trailhead and Facilities

The hike begins at the well-maintained trailhead, which features the historic Arnold Schoolhouse and ample parking is available. Visitors can find informative signage detailing the park's history, trail maps, and guidelines to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience. Basic facilities, including restrooms, and picnic areas are also available, making it a convenient starting point for a day of exploration.

The Trails

Watershed East boasts a network of marked trails catering to various skill levels from moderately easy walks to more challenging hikes. There are four main trails (North, Middle, West, and South) along with two smaller trails (Bridge and Short).

North Trail

Location: Begins at the bridge along the edge of the wetlands to Slating Lake.

Difficulty Level: Moderately Easy

Highlights: Ideal for a more leisurely stroll, this trail traverse's wetland areas.

Being on the edge of the wetlands, this trail allows hikers to get up close to the unique wetland ecosystem without disturbing it.

Observe the dense growth of non-native invasive phragmites that are crowding out more desirable native species. Look for frogs, turtles, and a variety of waterfowl including nesting Sandhill Cranes. Watch for beavers and their housing as you approach Slating Lake.

Middle Trail

Location: This trail is a shortcut from the bridge to the West Trail and Slating Lake.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Highlights: This trail winds through some open meadows, providing views of wildflowers in the spring and summer. It's an excellent area for spotting butterflies and other pollinators. It passes and gives access to Perch Pond and its dock and resting area. The gentle sloping terrain adds a bit of challenge without being too strenuous.

A Hikers Guide – Continued from Pg 3

West Trail:

Location: Runs North and South Alongside lakes Howard and Slating.

Difficulty Level: Challenging

Highlights: For those seeking strenuous hikes, the West Trail offers a rugged trek with some pronounced elevation changes especially if you use it to access the short trails to Slating Lake's Boat Launch and its observation/resting area. The trail rewards hikers with stunning vistas of the surrounding landscape, especially Slating Lake with its natural beauty.

South Trail:

Location: Begins at the bridge to Howard Lake and the West Trail.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

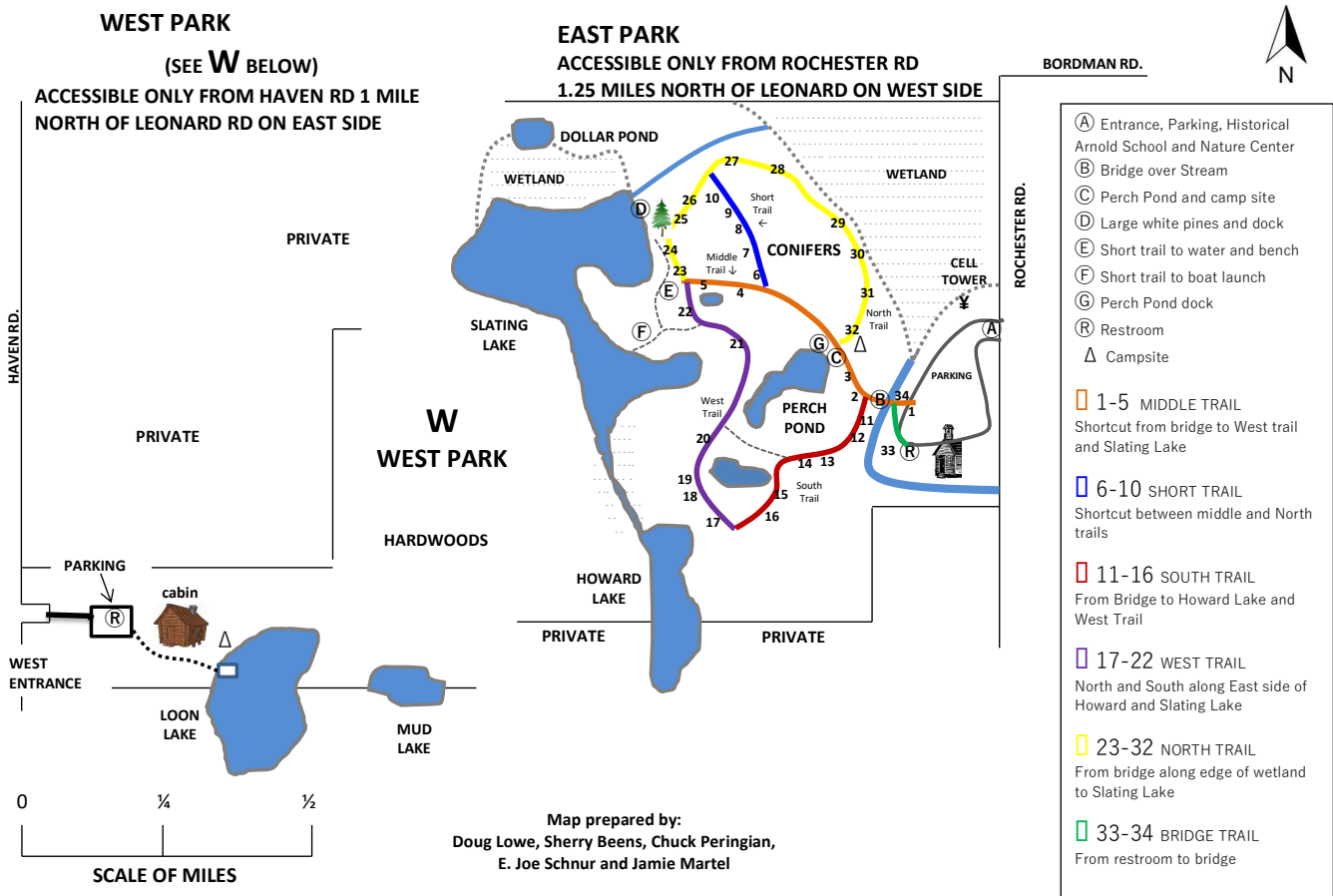
Highlights: This trail meanders through lush woodlands, offering a shaded and tranquil hike. Interpretive signs along the way provide insights into the local flora and fauna. Keep an eye out for deer, wild turkeys, and an array of songbirds. Catch scenic views of Howard Lake.

Conclusion:

A hike through Addison Township's Watershed Preserve Park offers an enriching experience, combining natural beauty, tranquility, and a touch of adventure.

Whether you are a seasoned hiker or a casual nature lover, the park's trails provide a perfect opportunity to connect with Michigan's great outdoors. Pack your hiking gear and discover the wonders of Addison Township's Watershed Nature Preserve Park.

ADDISON TOWNSHIP WATERSHED PRESERVE TRAIL MAP



What's Growing in Your Backyard?

By Chuck Peringian

Flora and Fauna

Watershed Preserve Park is a biodiversity hotspot; showcasing a wide variety of plant and animal species. The woodlands are dominated by Oak, Maple and Hickory trees, while the meadows burst with native grasses and wildflowers. Birdwatchers will be delighted by the presence of species such as Red-tailed Hawks, Osprey, Eastern Bluebirds, Great Blue Heron and an occasional Bald Eagle.

In the wetlands, you may encounter amphibians like the American Bullfrog and reptiles like the Painted Turtle. Mammals such as White-Tailed Deer, Red Fox, and Raccoons are frequently spotted throughout the park. The diverse habitats provide excellent opportunities for nature photography and wildlife observation.



Our natural landscape is changing. It's being replaced by invasive and aggressive woody shrubs and vines threatening the native plants and animals that call it their home. This problem was created by people unknowing of the consequences who brought them to our country from far-away places, most often to use for ornamental gardening or soil erosion control. This type of vegetation thrives, spreads rapidly and can over an area quickly by reproducing with an outward shallow root system along with an abundance of berries, or flowers with seeds. The invaders crowd out the in place natural and native vegetation which cannot compete. When these invaders enter an area, they are often unnoticed. Unfortunately, in just a few years they become dominant and most common vegetation. They thrive in neglect. What compounds this problem is these invasives seem to congregate or mingle together making it nearly impossible to remove and control them.

BELOW ARE SOME COMMON INVASIVES WHICH ARE EASY TO IDENTIFY:

Oriental or Round leaf Bittersweet – It has the appearance of native Michigan Bittersweet with orange cups and red berries. It climbs other vegetation by winding around it and eventually becomes thick and heavy, choking trees, causing them to break and fall to the ground. It has the ability to completely takeover an area not letting anything else to grow.

Multiflora Rose Bush - It's appearance when young is similar to our native Wild Rose Bush. Flowers are like our native Wild Rose but white with less of a pink cast. Michigan Wild Rose flowers are pink. The invasive Multiflora eventually grows much larger, up to 15' tall with a fountain type appearance. If left unmanaged, it forms dense thickets. The stalks become thick with razor like thorns.

Autumn Olive Bush – Once used for erosion control, it is easy to identify. The older growth branches have large thorns. Its' leaf underside is silver and produces red berries in late summer.

Phragmites – Found along wetland edges, ditches, and moist soil low lying areas where cattails are usually found. Left unmanaged, it will engulf an area, displacing the vegetation and animals with its dense monoculture, not allowing anything else to live. It can be easily identified by its height, thickness, and fuzzy brown tops.

Please make some time to inspect your property to see what's growing. If invasives are found, things can be done before it's too late. Invasives grow and spread in the spring and summer. Fall is a better time to attempt to remove them when their energy (sap) is directed downward to their root system. One popular method of control is to cut it as close to the ground as possible. You could choose to apply a chemical herbicide using an applicator with a sponge type tip on the freshly cut limb by dabbing it with a few drops. This will kill the root and is far more friendly to the environment than using a sprayer. Another popular way, but without any chemicals is to cut it as low as possible and mow the area to avoid growth. Something else should also be remembered. When we are at the nursery or garden center looking to purchase outdoor plants and shrubs, it's best to be knowledgeable of what we are buying. It could also spread out of control.

Addison Township Parks and Rec.

1440 Rochester Rd.
Leonard, MI 48367



*** Newsletter Edited and Published by Park Ranger Stephany Boegner ***

Tips for a Safe and Enjoyable Hike:

Dress appropriately.

Wear sturdy hiking boots, long sleeves and pants to protect against ticks and insects.

Bring your water bottle!

Be Prepared: Check the weather forecast and trail conditions before heading out.

Follow These No Trace Principles

Carry out all trash and respect the natural environment. Don't remove, disturb, injure or kill an animal, bird, tree or plant.

Did Someone Say Pickleball?

By Jamie Martel



Pickleball fans now have a new place to play in Addison Township's Park.

Three brand new dedicated pickleball courts made their debut back on June 17th 2024, as part of a larger vision to improve the parks infrastructure. Additional features added include a paved walking path and sand volleyball court. This was an exciting project and a significant improvement to Addison Township's Park, all made possible through grants and generous community donations.

Since completion, residents and visitors have flocked to the courts daily. People of all skill levels and age groups have been seen playing together on the new courts. We are just thrilled to bring these new and refreshed amenities to the residents of Addison Township. Our parks are a melting pot of our community. They create opportunities for people of all ages to come together to be active, develop new interests and thrive.

The **pickleball courts are available at no charge on a first-come, first-served basis from 9am to 9pm during the spring, summer and fall months.** We encourage you to check out this fantastic new community resource and learn more about the health and wellness benefits of pickleball as a recreational and social opportunity.