

Cuyahoga Valley

Official Map and Guide



Where the Sidewalk Ends

The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area (CVNRA) preserves 33,000 acres of pastoral valley along 22 miles of the Cuyahoga River between the cities of Cleveland and Akron, Ohio. Rather than a distant and forbidding wilderness, this park is nearby, welcoming, and comfortably familiar, sort of “just down the street and around the block, where the sidewalk ends” for millions of urban Americans. It is easily accessible, yet offers a sharp contrast to its urban surroundings.

In a gradually changing environment where fewer and fewer places allow us time and space to rediscover the beauty and meaning of nature, the peace of the countryside, or the substance of our past, the need to protect landscapes that refresh the spirit and restore our perceptions has become one of the most basic requirements of environmental and recreational planning. The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area preserves such a place, a landscape where recreation can be a process of perceiving and appreciating the roots of our temporary existence. It is also a place of active recreation, where you can refresh body and spirit, and an educational place, where nature and history study opportunities abound. And it is a place of settings—for artistic events, social gatherings, solitude and creativity. As urban growth continues, as gasoline prices rise, and as living density increases around it, CVNRA will grow in importance and service to people of all cultures and backgrounds.

Sculpted by glaciers, streams, and the persistent forces of weather, the Cuyahoga River Valley landscape is an enchanting diversity of river floodplain, steep and gentle valley walls

forested by deciduous and evergreen woods, numerous tributaries and their ravines, and upland plateaus. It is home to a wide variety of wildlife and plants, amazingly numerous given their close proximity to major metropolitan and industrial areas. The big animals—the bear, the wolf, the puma—are no longer here. Nor are the vast virgin forests once so characteristic of this region. The Cuyahoga Valley is now a harmonious blend of human and natural history. The bison have been replaced by cows and horses. Forests have been broken up by rolling farmland. Freshwater ponds dot the landscape, and pastures and meadows in various stages of succession are interwoven with wooded hills. Remains of the old Ohio and Erie Canal, replaced by railroad and highway, blend into the river and valley scene.

The central and dominant feature of the valley is the Cuyahoga River, named centuries ago by the Indians whose word for it was “ka-ih-ogh-ha,” meaning crooked. And crooked it is, throughout its 90 miles. It rises in Geauga County just 30 miles east of its mouth in Cleveland. It flows in a great U, the base being the escarpment on which sits the city of Akron, Ohio. And as it flows, it twists and turns. Not long, nor wide, nor deep, the Cuyahoga has a history that makes it important beyond its size.

For centuries the river and its valley have provided a vital transportation route, home, and livelihood for wildlife and people. Prehistoric peoples left behind a legacy of archeological sites throughout the valley. It was neutral ground to many historic Indian tribes, so that all might travel on it from the cold waters of the Great Lakes to the short portage across the watershed divide

National Recreation Area
Ohio

National Park Service
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to reach the Tuscarawas River, connecting to the waters of the Ohio River and the warm South. The river was labeled on New World maps of the 17th century. The Moravian village of Pilgerruh, the first but short-lived white settlement in the valley, was located near the confluence of Tinkers Creek and the river in 1786 just 10 years before Moses Cleaveland and surveyors from Connecticut laid out the Western Reserve for settlement. By treaty between the young United States and Indian tribes, land west of the river was Indian territory until 1805. Early traders and settlers found the river as important as the Indians before them had. Farmers down to the present day have found the valley soil productive and easy to work, and the upper slopes good for orchards. Now the CVNRA preserves farmlands where people can buy corn, pumpkins, and other fresh produce, and where they can watch cattle grazing or sheep being sheared.

In 1827, the Ohio and Erie Canal was opened between Cleveland and Akron. It paralleled and was partly watered by the river. It replaced the Cuyahoga as the major transportation artery and opened up Ohio and the Midwest to commerce and industrialization. The city of Akron was a product of the canal. In 1880, the railroad replaced the canal as the major transportation route for commerce, industry, and travel. Running through the valley, it led to the eventual demise of the canal but caused the growth of the cities.

As the cities grew, the Cuyahoga Valley began taking on a different kind of significance, a place to escape from the less beneficial aspects of the urban environment. Both Cleveland

and Akron established metropolitan parks in the valley. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and inner city organizations established camps here. The Cleveland Orchestra eventually came to create a summer home at Blossom Music Center.

Continuing urbanization, spreading development, population growth, highway improvements and migration to the suburbs became increasing threats to the greenscape, history, and recreational opportunities of the valley. Efforts by private citizens and local and state government to save it grew and gained momentum in the 1960s and early 1970s. These efforts finally crossed paths with major, new National Park Service directions to bring parks to the people by establishing urban recreation areas. In December 1974, Congress created the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area as an urban park of the National Park System. Here the National Park Service is retrieving natural landscapes and processes, and restoring historic sites throughout the park where commercialism and development have already intruded. Perhaps one of its most important values is as a symbol and signal of a new relationship between people and their environment. Today it is one of the 341 areas nationwide that the National Park Service administers in its efforts to preserve the best of our Nation’s natural and cultural heritage.



Springtime trillium



Cooling water on a hot summer’s day at Brandywine Falls



Fall colors and a country road



The Everett Road covered bridge keeps snow off the roadway.

The Seasons

The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area is a place of diversity. Its character and appearance change from place to place, and it has changed with the events of history. CVNRA also undergoes miraculous changes with the seasons, from spring’s wildflowers, through the wide variety of summer activities and spectacular fall color, to winter’s beauty and sports.

Spring comes noisily and dramatically to the Cuyahoga Valley as streams filled with melted snow tumble to the river. It comes with a wedge of geese flying northward, a pair of young squirrels experimenting with jumps between bouncing branches, and a green skunk cabbage cone pushing up through mud. Spring brings the melody of the song sparrow in the meadows and the shrill chorus of spring peepers from the ponds and marshes. Willow trees become fountains of pale yellow green; a rosy tint halos the maples. As the air warms and the woods dry, violets spread a purple carpet; tiny spring-beauties nestle among last year’s matted leaves; and stalwart trilliums brighten sun-dappled hillsides. Spring is the time to walk the Daffodil Trail when thousands of flowers bloom over a six-week period in the shadow of great, gray beeches. Spring is the time to fly a kite on the wide open hilltops of Kendall Hills and spring is the time to just look and see and wonder at the ever-quickenings changes that come to the valley and spread up its slopes.

Summer is playtime in the valley. Joggers and cyclists and antique car buffs go back and forth over the flat valley roads along the river. Wanderers find a coolness on the trails of the Virginia Kendall unit of the park, especially at Icebox Cave. Families stroll along the towpath of the old canal enjoying the separation from road and car. Through the woodlands, emerging to ford a stream, come horseback riders on bridle paths.

Summer may dawn early as you join a naturalist for a morning bird walk. Dusk may come late if you picnic on the lawn before a concert at Blossom Music Center. Or you may spend the day in solitude.

Fall is when the woodlands glow with color. Scarlet are the hillsides where the spreading maples stand; rusty are the sturdy oaks. Those splashes of bright yellow are tulip trees. October in the Cuyahoga Valley is truly a spectacle of color. It is a time when you can walk or bicycle the trails, enjoying the rustle of freshly fallen leaves and the crisp cool air and marveling at a bird’s nest unseen last summer. Fall is for roadside wonders, too. The browning cattail marks the marsh; the purplish New England aster marks the drylands. Blue chicory shines in the scrubbiest places while yellow goldenrod, white Queen Anne’s lace, and golden evening primrose all take turns decorating the landscape.

It’s time for the last-of-season corn—succulent ears that the Indians introduced to the earliest settlers in the valley. Fall is the smile of fat pumpkins and the clamor of katydid and cricket. Fall brings dense fogs in the valley and crisp stars over the hilltop. It is a pleasurable time for settling in for the long sleep of winter.

Winter is for the vigorous folk who sled, ski, and toboggan. It is also a time for the photographer as snows define trails and trees while blanketing other natural features. Cardinals add touches of bright red to branches of snow-laden trees. On extra-cold, sunny mornings hoarfrost sparkles on trees and weeds along the open river. Now the buttons of the sycamore tree and the seed cups of the tulip poplar are stiff against the clear sky. Deer often cross the highway at noon instead of at dawn or dusk. The tracks of a ruffed grouse or raccoon may be seen near one’s own footprints in the snow.

Through the northern end of the park, cold breezes ripple the waters of the canal. Creeks are rimmed with ever-changing patterns and levels of ice. On open hillsides, any flat object passes for a sled. Saucers, plastic mats, inner tubes, and traditional sleds with runners are all part of the colorful family mix. Flatter areas invite the crosscountry skier and snowshoer. Fires stoked in winter shelters by park rangers send out their

smoky fragrance, a smell of winter, and the promise of warmth.

Christmas at Hale Farm is celebrated with the burning of a yule log while carols are sung outdoors. In the old brick homestead, decorations speak of those pioneers who knew the winters of long ago.

And soon the air begins to warm and the elusive smell of spring is in the air once again as the cycle of the seasons adds to the miracle and magic of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area.

A Management Mosaic

The National Park Service manages the CVNRA in cooperation with others who own property within its boundary. While private lands needed for public use are being purchased, much public land has already been donated by the State of Ohio; and while other public lands may be

transferred in the future, several other compatible public and private ownerships will continue. This is a continuation of a tradition of public and private cooperation that has deep roots in this valley.

Youth and scout camps remain independently operated. Commercial recreation enterprises such as ski areas and golf courses continue. The Western Reserve Historical Society maintains its ownership of Hale Farm and Village, as does the Musical Arts Association at Blossom

Music Center, and Kent State University at Porthouse Theater. Cleveland Metroparks and Metro Parks, Serving Summit County administer several of their units within CVNRA. All of these operations have natural preservation, his-

tory, cultural arts, and outdoor recreation purposes similar to and compatible with the National Park Service and help it accomplish its job here. These partners are an important part of the rich diversity of cultural and recreational

features of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area and will continue to contribute to its character and the wide range of attractions.



Horse power does the work at Hale Farm.



Stamford Farm Hostel offers simple lodging.



Golfers rise to the challenge.



Music under summer moonlight makes lasting memories at the Blossom Music Center.



Wintertime brings skiing.



A steam engine puffs alongside the river.



Fall walks beside the water refresh the soul.

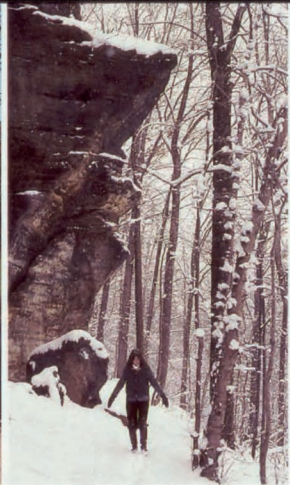
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Fall brings tours of schoolchildren.



Wintertime at the Kendall Ledges.



Biking is a popular sport.



Keeping each line separate could be difficult.



The red fox is one of many wildlife species.



Games are popular in the wide open spaces.



Many miles of hiking trails entice the walker.

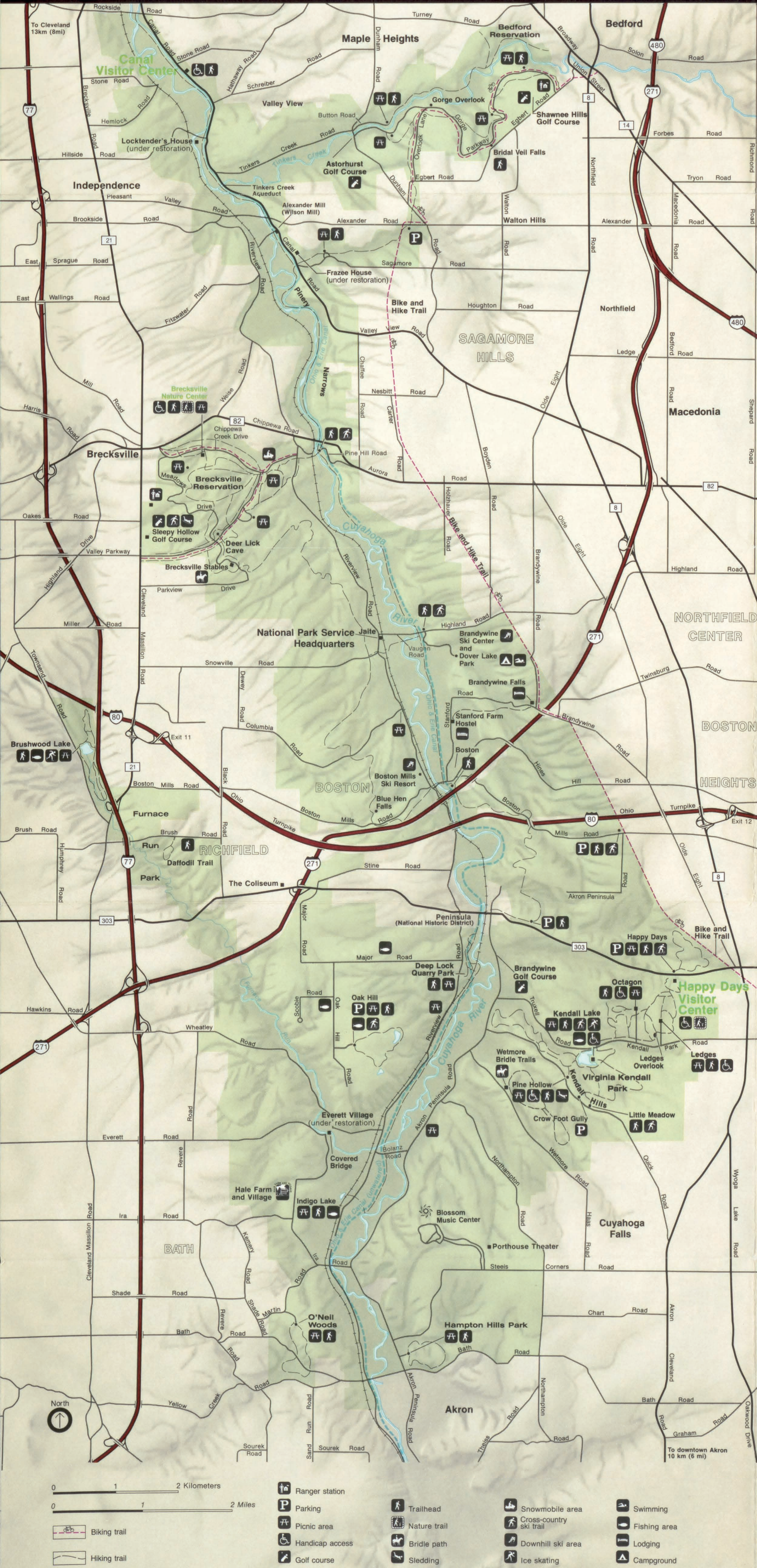
Beside all the fixed programs and facilities, you will continually discover new places to go and things to do throughout the park. Nature walks, campfire programs, arts and crafts, stories, dramatic and musical presentations, and special recreational events change with the seasons. Inquire at the visitor centers or ask rangers for the latest developments and programs. Perhaps more important than all the facilities and events

is how each person creatively finds a way to relax and keep in touch with friends, self, nature, and the past. With its diversity of resources and changing landscapes the park offers a vast array of opportunities. Let your imagination be your guide and always keep in mind that much of the land within the boundaries has yet to be acquired. Some will remain in private ownership through scenic easement. We ask that you

respect the rights and privacy of others. If in doubt about ownership, please ask a park ranger or stop in at a visitor center. Remember also that every place is home to some living thing. Please tread carefully and with respect wherever you go—down the street and around the block, where the sidewalk ends.

Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. For further information write to the superintendent, whose address is 15610 Vaughn Road, Brecksville, OH 44141

Park and Area Map



A Guide

Getting Around the Park

You can move around and through the park in any number of ways, including scenic drives on back-country roads, hiking, riding horseback, jogging, and skiing. Bicycling is popular on many small, quiet park roads, and especially on Riverview Road and the Akron-Peninsula Road since they stay in the valley and have few hills. Those who want the safety and beauty of trails for biking, hiking, crosscountry skiing, or jogging should explore the paved all-purpose trails in Bedford and Brecksville reservations and the *Bike and Hike Trail* that runs from Alexander Road south of Bedford Reservation to Kent, Ohio, touching the eastern edge of CVNRA. Maintained by Cleveland Metroparks and the Metro Parks, Serving Summit County this level, surfaced trail follows the former Penn Central railroad bed. Hiking trails explore various portions of CVNRA, meandering over the valley's rural roads, paths, and canal towpath. Details and information on all hiking, skiing, and bicycle trails can be obtained at

the visitor centers. The Buckeye Trail runs the length of the park and beyond, making an 1,100-mile loop around the entire State of Ohio. Maps of the trail are for sale at the visitor centers. Running the full length of the park and beyond is the historic Valley Railroad. On summer and fall weekends, visitors can ride the *Cuyahoga Valley Line* (fee), a passenger train pulled by a steam locomotive, and enjoy yet another historic and scenic perspective of the Cuyahoga Valley. The train is owned and operated by private, nonprofit organizations. National Park Service rangers are usually aboard.

Safety

Remember that the very best trips to the park are those occasions that are free of accidents, so be alert to potential hazard situations and avoid them. Be especially careful near rock ledges and waterfalls.

Climbing on rocks and ledges is prohibited. When sightseeing, hiking, bicycling, or jogging along park roads, be cautious and considerate. These roads are shared by many and occasionally carry fast moving traffic. In winter be extra cautious on icy roads, trails, overlooks, and around lakes and ponds. Skate only at designated areas. Whatever the season or activity, keep an eye on small children and others. Report all accidents and emergencies to park rangers as soon as possible.

Because of the concern about water quality in the Cuyahoga River, canoeing and other types of recreation that could involve potential body contact are discouraged. Respect private property rights. Do not drink water from streams and ponds; carry all drinking water. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Learn to recognize poison ivy and avoid it.

Ohio and Erie Canal District and Bedford Reservation to Pinery Narrows

At the *Canal Visitor Center* you will find National Park Service rangers to help you with information on the CVNRA and the National Park System. You will also find exhibits, publications, and programs on the history and natural history of the park as well as a schedule of special activities and events. The visitor center is located on Canal Road and is open year-round, seven days a week to answer your questions.

At the junction of Hillside and Canal Roads, you will find the *Locktender's House*. This was an important canal complex, for here, tradition has it, lived the locktender who operated and maintained the adjacent *Twelve-Mile Lock*, so-called because it is that far from Lake Erie. The house has had a checkered career and has been at various times a hotel, saloon, dance hall, grocery store, and a blacksmith shop. Eventually it will house the National Park Service's permanent Canal Visitor Center.

Bedford Reservation is owned and operated by the Cleveland Metroparks system. The Gorge Parkway winds through this unit and provides an overlook into Tinker's Creek Gorge, a National Natural Area. The park contains marked hiking trails, bridle paths, a paved all-purpose trail for biking and jogging, a physical fitness trail near the northern end of the Gorge Parkway, playing fields, picnic areas and shelters, and the Shawnee Hills Golf Course and Driving Range (fee). Sledding and crosscountry skiing are permitted

in winter. *Astorbush Golf Course* (fee) is nearby and reached from Dunham Road.

An early engineering achievement, the *Tinkers Creek Aqueduct*, was necessary to carry canal water across Tinkers Creek. When the canal was in operation boats floated across this water-filled bridge.

Wilson's Mill, the last operating mill on the canal, was originally built in 1853 and known as Alexander's Mill. During the 19th century sawmills and gristmills were common and frequent enterprises along the canal because of the dependable water supply. Although now powered electrically, the mill was originally powered by a horizontal, interior turbine rather than the traditional overshot wheel and we are accustomed to seeing. Adjacent to the mill is *Fourteen-Mile Lock*.

Built in the 1820s, the scenic red brick *Frazee House* on the hill overlooking the canal was one of the earliest structures in the Cuyahoga Valley. It has witnessed both stagecoach and canal traffic. Eventually it will house the National Park Service's museum of the Ohio and Erie Canal, remains of which run 20 miles through the heart of the park and comprise one of CVNRA's most important historic resources. All canal features are on the National Register of Historic Places.

From the Frazee House south to the beautiful Ohio 82

bridge, you will find the *Pinery Narrows*. No road penetrates this quiet and narrowest section of the Cuyahoga River, but the 2½-mile trail along the canal towpath does. Here you can get away from it all and let your mind wander back into history, for from Ohio 82 north the old Ohio and Erie Canal is still watered. The canal, towpath, the river, and the railroad tracks meander along through the narrow side-by-side reminding the hiker or skier of the evolution of valley transportation systems so vital to the development of Ohio and the Midwest. With imagination your mind wanders over the succession of Indians and French traders plying the river in canoes, family canal boats usurping the river trade, and hooting steam trains eventually overpowering and heralding the end of the slower, quieter canal days. Emerging once again to the fast-paced network of highways, you are reminded of how roads finally led to the end of railroad supremacy and to the hustle and bustle of the modern world. You may choose to turn around and go back into the nostalgic and tranquil time capsule that is Pinery Narrows.

Beside the canal, the towpath serves as a trail right through the center of the park from Rockside Road on the north to near Ira Road on the south. The section between Boston and Peninsula is currently not passable. The towpath is an inviting way in which to explore the canal's many features.

Brecksville Reservation to Peninsula

Brecksville Reservation, owned and operated by the Cleveland Metroparks, covers an area on the west side of the valley and the uplands. Here you will find hiking trails, bridle paths, stables, several miles of paved all-purpose trails for biking and jogging, a physical fitness trail, playing fields, and picnic areas and shelters. At the Brecksville Nature Center you can get information on the natural history of the area and meet Metropark naturalists. The *Sleepy Hollow Golf Course* (fee) is located within Brecksville Reservation. *Sleepy Hollow* hosts a major crosscountry ski center during the winter.

South of Brecksville Reservation, at the junction of Riverview Road and Vaughn Road, you will discover the remnants of the company town of *Jailie*. Both the town and the nearby paper mill, *Boston Mills*, are on the National Register of Historic Places. The company store and houses you see were built for millworkers. The National Park Service headquarters is located in these buildings—an example of adaptive reuse.

The two downhill ski areas (fee) within CVNRA are located in the central section of the park: *Brandywine Ski Center* off Highland Road and *Boston Mills Ski Resort* on Riverview Road. These commercial downhill ski areas use snowmakers to prolong the season.

Classes are available and equipment may be bought or rented. Both areas are developing summer activities to make their facilities of year-round benefit to park visitors. In summer Boston Mills is host to art shows and classes (fee). Brandywine becomes Dover Lake Park and offers camping, swimming, and other water sports (fee).

Just east of the Boston Mills Ski Resort is the historic Ohio and Erie Canal Village of Boston. The town grew up with the canal, and together they shared the ups and downs of boom and bust cycles. Jim Brown (1800-65), a famous counterfeiter, lived in and operated from the village. From Ohio 82 south the canal is abandoned and unwatered but you can plainly see the grassy remnant of the canal running through the town alongside the old Boston Company store and beside the Cuyahoga River. The canal towpath serves as a hiking and crosscountry skiing trail north to the Pinery Narrows. Much of the property within Boston is privately owned, so please respect property and privacy.

Northeast of Boston is the Stanford Farm Hostel. The American Youth Hostel Association offers overnight accommodations, meal preparation facilities in the historic Stanford farmhouse, originally the home of one of the valley's early settlers.

Virginia Kendall Area

With woods and meadows laced with trails connecting playing fields, picnic areas and shelters, caves, and sandstone rock ledges, *Virginia Kendall Park*, operated by the National Park Service, is one of the oldest and most popular areas within the CVNRA.

We encourage you to make a stop early in your visit at the *Happy Days Visitor Center* on Ohio 303, east of Peninsula and west of Ohio 8. National Park Service rangers are on duty seven days a week to provide you with information on things to see and do in the park, or to help you plan your visits to other National Park areas across the Nation. The rustic Happy Days building was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s as a day camp for inner-city children, now houses exhibits and a publications sales

center. This building also is the setting for films, slide shows, ranger-led activities, and special events designed to help you understand and use all park resources.

Connected by trails and road to Happy Days are three other CCC structures. Near the *Ledges Shelter* are open playing fields and a network of trails leading to major geological features, such as rock ledges with hanging gardens and Icebox Cave. The *Octagon Shelter* is adjacent to open playing fields and picnic areas. Kendall Lake nature walks are important summer activities. In the winter, ice skating, crosscountry skiing, and snowshoeing are the predominant activities, with *Kendall Lake Shelter* serving as a winter activity center. Adjacent to Kendall Lake is *Kendall*

Furnace Run Park to Everett Village

Furnace Run Park is owned and operated by Metro Parks, Serving Summit County. The park lies in the valley of a small stream named Furnace Run on the western uplands of the Cuyahoga Valley. Near Brushwood Lake where you can ice skate in winter is a picnic area and a shelter that can be reserved. A number of trails lead into the park from this point. Sledding and crosscountry skiing are also available in winter. Off Brush Road is the Daffodil Trail where every spring thousands of blooming daffodils give a special exuberance to the season.

Southeast of Furnace Run on the valley's western rim is the Oak Hill Day Use Area with picnicking, hiking, crosscountry skiing, and fishing on Sylvan Lake and

Meadowedge Pond. The Earthlore Environmental Education Campus is nearby, offering day use and residential learning for students and workshops for teachers. Ask at visitor centers for more information about Earthlore.

A few miles south of Peninsula is *Deep Lock Quarry Park* operated by Metro Parks, Serving Summit County. It contains the remains of the deepest lock on the Ohio and Erie Canal and abandoned sandstone quarries, stones from which have been used as building materials throughout the area for more than a century. The park is an excellent place to watch the spring warbler migrations and to begin a hike north to Peninsula or south to Everett and Indigo Lake.

Spanning Furnace Run just west of *Everett Village* is the last covered bridge in the area. A favorite place of artists, photographers, and history buffs, the Everett bridge was washed out during a spring storm in 1975 and restored by the National Park Service in 1986. Open now only to non-vehicular traffic, the bridge site is a good area from which to begin an exploration of Furnace Run; avoid the stream during high water.

South of Deep Lock Quarry, near the confluence of Furnace Run and the Cuyahoga River you will discover the remains of the old rural village of Everett. Currently the National Park Service plans to restore Everett and develop it into an artist-in-residence community.

Hale Farm and Blossom Music Center to O'Neil Woods and Hampton Hills

Hale Farm and Village (fee) is owned and operated by the Western Reserve Historical Society. The farm portion is centered around the 1826 brick farmstead of Jonathan Hale, one of the earliest settlers in the Western Reserve—land retained, or reserved, by Connecticut after the American Revolution for settlement by its citizens. The restoration of Hale Farm is intended to recreate an early Ohio way of life. Across the road from the farm is the Western Reserve Village (fee). This is a collection of historic buildings from all over the region that were threatened with destruction and were moved here so that they would be preserved. These rescued buildings now reflect the components of a typical village around a village green of bygone days. Blacksmiths, potters, spinners, weavers, candlemakers, and glassblowers demonstrate these and other traditional crafts. Special events are also conducted on many weekends from spring through early fall.

On Riverview Road east of Hale Farm, the National Park Service has developed an old quarry into Indigo Lake for hiking and fishing. Nearby is a beaver marsh. The Howe Farm Special Events Site, where large festivals, recreational events, and other special activities are conducted, is also nearby.

Popular and classical music fills the warm evening air at *Blossom Music Center* (fee), summer home of the Cleveland Orchestra. A natural grass amphitheater is the setting for picnics before the concert and romantic evenings under the stars. This unit is owned and operated by the Musical Arts Association.

Adjacent to Blossom is Kent State University's *Porthouse Theater* (fee), where summer stock includes Shakespeare, Broadway musicals, opera, and drama.

O'Neil Woods Park is administered by Metro Parks,

Serving Summit County. The park has a picnic area, meadows, playing field, and a trail that follows bubbling Yellow Creek for a portion of its distance. Large sycamores and bittersweet cover the bottom lands along the creek. Many of the old farm fields, now untended, are reverting to woodlands.

Across the valley to the east lies *Hampton Hills Park*, a unit of Metro Parks, Serving Summit County. Besides a picnic area and playing fields, it has a ballfield and hiking trails following Adam's Run. Wildflowers grow in profusion on the stream's banks among the sycamores and black walnuts.