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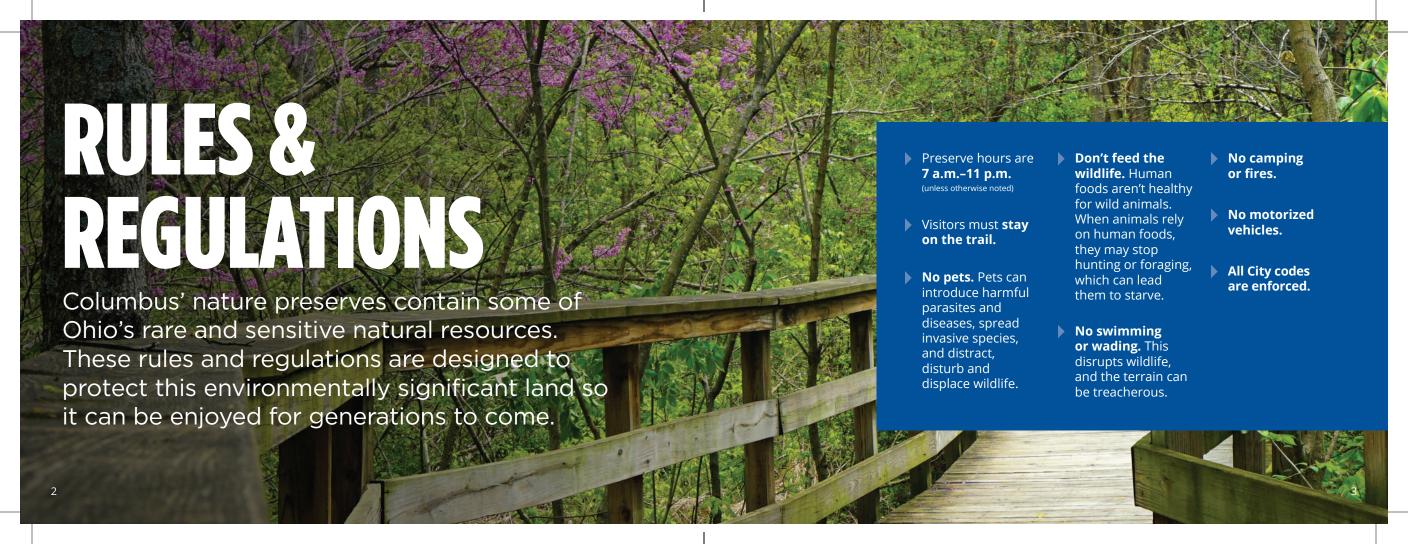
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# **HISTORY**

Nature preserves provide habitat for different species of plants and wildlife amid Columbus' urban landscape. Our nature preserve system conserves and enhances ecologically significant land through research, awareness and education.

Columbus Recreation and Parks Department has 25 designated nature preserves that encompass over 2,850 acres across Franklin and Delaware counties. The first City nature preserves were adopted in 1988; additional preserves were added in 2004, 2010, 2016 and 2024. In 2022, nature preserve code language was adopted into Columbus City Code, strengthening protections for this significant land.

# **LISTED SPECIES**

Animal or plant species of conservation concern may be listed as threatened or endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

A **federal listing** means a species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of the area. This may encompass several other states or nations.

A **state listing** means a species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of the state.



# WHAT IS A HABITAT?

A habitat is a place where an organism makes its home. Habitats provide food, water and shelter that animals and plants need to survive. There are a variety of habitats across Columbus' nature preserves, including:







GRASSLANDS



WATERWAYS



# COMMONLY FOUND **TREES** IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



American elm Ulmus americana



Eastern cottonwood

Populus deltoides



Eastern red cedar Juniperus virginiana



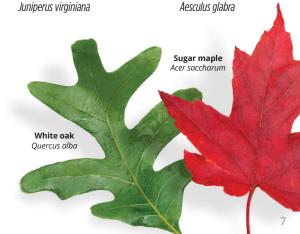
Ohio buckeye



Sugar maple Acer saccharum



White oak
Quercus alba





# WILDFLOWERS

Wildflowers grow naturally in their environment and support our ecosystem and pollinators.







# COMMONLY FOUND **WILDFLOWERS** IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



**Mayapple** *Podophyllum peltatum* 



Spring beauty Claytonia virginica



Cut-leaved toothwort
Cardamine concatenata



Jack-in-the-pulpit
Arisaema triphyllum



Yellow trout lily
Ervthronium americanum



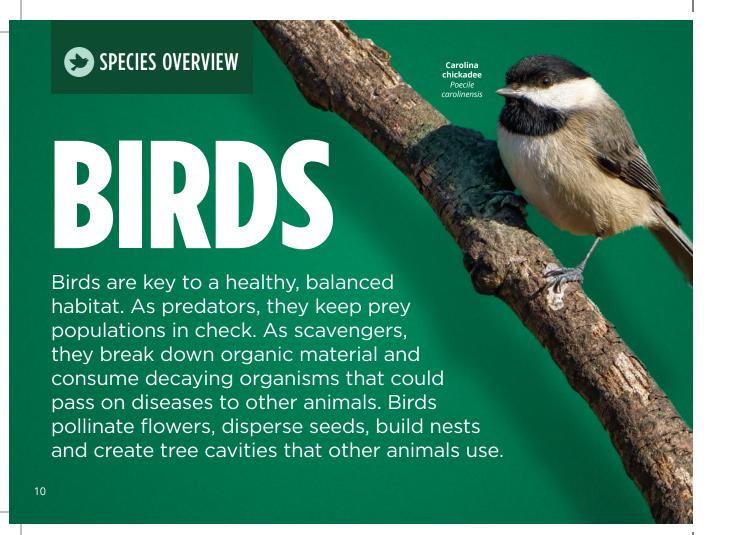
**Bloodroot** Sanguinaria canadensis



Golden ragwort
Packera aurea



Dutchman's breeches
Dicentra cucullaria



# COMMONLY FOUND **BIRDS** IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



Carolina chickadee
Poecile carolinensis



Northern cardinal
Cardinalis cardinalis



Red-bellied woodpecker

Melanerpes carolinus



**Red-winged blackbird** *Agelaius phoeniceus* 



**Tree swallow** *Tachycineta bicolor* 



House wren
Troglodytes aedon



**Great blue heron** *Ardea herodias* 



**Tufted titmouse** *Baeolophus bicolor* 



# MAMMALS

Mammals are critical members of the food web, whether as predators or prey. Some also are part of symbiotic relationships with other species, meaning both species serve an important role in the other's survival. One example of this is that coyotes and badgers are more successful at hunting when paired up.

# cottontail

# COMMONLY FOUND **MAMMALS** IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



Raccoon Procyon lotor



White-tailed deer Odocoileus virginianus



Eastern gray squirrel
Sciurus carolinensis



Eastern chipmunk
Tamias striatus



**Eastern cottontail** Sylvilagus floridanus



**Red fox** Vulpes vulpes

# DID YOU KNOW?

Feeding wildlife harms
ecosystems. Mammals, like
squirrels that use their keen
sense of smell to find hidden
nuts, are adapted to forage
on their own. Giving them snacks
disrupts their natural behavior and
can be detrimental in the long run.





# AMPHBANS & REPTILES

Amphibians and reptiles are important aquatic and terrestrial members of the ecosystem that serve as both predator and prey. They also control populations of insects like mosquitoes.

# **REPTILES** FOUND IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



**Brown snake** Storeria dekayi



**Common watersnake** Nerodia sipedon



# **AMPHIBIANS** FOUND IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



**Small-mouthed salamander** Ambystoma texanum



**Northern green frog** Rana clamitans melanota





# COMMONLY FOUND **INSECTS** IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



**Monarch butterfly** Danaus plexippus



**Convergent lady beetle** Hippodamia convergens



**Cabbage white** Pieris rapae



**Eastern tiger swallowtail** Papilio glaucus



**Blue dasher** Pachydiplax longipennis



Epargyreus clarus



**Silver-spotted skipper** 





# MACROINVERTEBRATES

Planeria

& FISH

Macroinvertebrates help
recycle nutrients back into
the ecosystem and are an
important food source for fish,
birds, amphibians and reptiles. Fish
play an important role in the food web,
nutrient cycling and ecosystem resilience.

# **MACROINVERTEBRATES** FOUND IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



Fairy shrimp Eubranchipus vernalis



**Planaria** *Platyhelminthes* 



**Fingernail clam** *Pisidium moitessierianum* 



Rusty crayfish
Faxonius rusticus

# **FISH** FOUND IN OUR NATURE PRESERVES INCLUDE:



Rainbow darter Etheostoma caeruleum



**Bluegill**Lepomis macrochirus



Brook silverside
Labidesthes sicculus

# **DID YOU KNOW?**

Macroinvertebrates spend their entire lives in one small area and do not migrate, which means they often show the effects of changes in a habitat. This makes macroinvertebrates good indicators of the health of our streams and waterways.



# **Beechwold Nature Preserve**

includes a riparian forest along the Olentangy River and a forested ravine that stretches up into the Beechwold neighborhood. The forest features mature native trees such as beech, oak and hickory with a variety of woodland wildflowers and native shrubs in the understory.

# SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:

- 1 American beech Fagus grandifolia
- **Eastern redback salamander** *Plethodon cinereus*
- 3 Black cherry
  Prunus serotina

- Snuffbox mussel
  Epioblasma triquetra
  - Kidneyshell mussel
    Ptychobranchus fasciolaris
    STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN
  - Elktoe mussel

    Alasmidonta raveneliana

    STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN



# **Coronet Woods Nature Preserve**

is largely an upland forest and features a small wetland that is fed by both precipitation and groundwater. Historically, Coronet Woods was agricultural land until approximately the 1950s, when the land was unoccupied and natural forest succession occurred, forming the woods we see today.

- Calico aster
   Symphyotrichum lateriflorum
- 2 Hackberry Celtis occidentalis
- **Eastern fox squirrel** *Sciurus niger*





# **Gertrude S. Lawrence Woods Nature Preserve**

is a forested area situated high above two ravines that feed into Hoover Reservoir. You can view the flooded ravines from two overlooks on the loop trail. In the fall, they drain and become mudflats, filtering the water and absorbing sediment, nutrients and pollutants.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

# **FEDERAL/STATE LISTED SPECIES:**

- Fan clubmoss
   Diphasiastrum digitatum
- 2 Acadian flycatcher Empidonax virescens
- 3 Liverwort
  Hepatica nobilis

Prothonotary warbler
Protonotaria citrea
STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN



# **Griggs Nature Preserve**

features varying topography, including hillside slopes, steep cliffs and river bottomlands. The nature preserve is located on the 6-mile-long Griggs Reservoir. You can access Griggs Nature Preserve through Kiwanis Riverway Nature Preserve or by the Scioto River.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

- Common self-heal Prunella vulgaris
- Chinkapin oak Quercus muehlenbergii
- North American beaver Castor canadensis

- Rayed bean mussel Villosa fabalis STATE ENDANGERED
  - Arborvitae Thuia occidentalis
    - STATE POTENTIALLY THREATENED



# Hamilton Road Wetland Nature Preserve

consists of mature woodlands that feature vernal pools. This preserve provides habitat to the largest great blue heron rookery in Franklin County. As many as 50 nests can be found in the interior beech-dominated area of the woods.

- Spring peeper
  Pseudacris crucifer
- 2 Great blue heron
  Ardea herodias
- 3 Buttonbush
  Cephalanthus occidentalis





# **Hayden Falls Nature Preserve**

features a limestone gorge that includes a stunning 35-foot natural waterfall located on the western shore of the Scioto River. Hayden Falls is a historically and geologically significant site for central Ohio, drawing visitors to this destination spot for over a century.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

- Maidenhair fern

  Adiantum pedatum
- 2 American basswood Tilia americana
- 3 Cliff swallow
  Petrochelidon pyrrhonota

- nir fern Rayed bean mussel Villosa fabalis
  - Spreading rock cress

    Arabis patens



# **Hickory Woods Nature Preserve**

is composed entirely of an upland forest habitat with many mature hickory and beech trees. It also has a largely open understory featuring native spicebush. Forests serve an important role in the local ecosystem by regulating the flow of water in the area.

- Northern red oak

  Quercus rubra
- **Virginia opossum** *Didelphis virginiana*
- 3 Shagbark hickory Carva ovata





# **Hoover Nature Preserve**

was a result of the Hoover Dam and subsequent reservoir being built in 1954. The area has become a popular birding spot for viewing migratory waterfowl and shorebirds in spring and fall. This area features the largest breeding population of prothonotary warblers in Ohio.

# SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:

- American tree sparrow
   Spizelloides arborea
- 2 Black willow Salix nigra
- **Jefferson salamander** *Ambystoma jeffersonianum*

- Blue catfish

  Ictalurus furcatus

  STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN
- Cerulean warbler
  Setophaga cerulea
  state species of concern
- Prothonotary warbler
  Protonotaria citrea
  STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN



# **Hoover Meadows Nature Preserve**

features diverse habitat types including woodland, wetland, vernal pool, grassland and stream. The wetlands provide good habitat for migrating birds such as soras and bitterns. A large vernal pool nestled in the woods provides vital breeding ground for amphibians.

- Spotted salamander
   Ambystoma maculatum
- Least bittern lxobrychus exilis
- 3 Sora
  Porzana carolina





# **Hoover Oxbow Nature Preserve**

showcases an upland forest intertwined with wooded wetlands along the western shores of Hoover Reservoir. Popular for boat launching, fishing and birding, it serves as a favored spot for winter waterfowl as they migrate, particularly in the vicinity directly east and south of the preserve.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

# FEDERAL/STATE LISTED SPECIES:

- 1 Pin oak Quercus palustris
- 2 Sassafras Sassafras albidum
- **3 Bufflehead duck** *Bucephala albeola*

Blue catfish

Ictalurus furcatus

STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN



# **Hoover Prairie Nature Preserve**

features an upland forest and a prairie habitat. The 100-year-old prairie provides habitat to the state's only known population of the state-threatened Gattinger's-foxglove. In 1973, Naturalist John Thomas discovered the first wild indigo dusky wing skipper here.

# SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:

- Prairie blazing star
  Liatris pycnostachya
- 2 Common milkweed Asclepias syriaca
- 3 Summer azure Celastrina neglecta

- Gattinger's-foxglove
  Agalinis gattingeri
- Blue catfish
  Ictalurus furcatus
  STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN
- Prothonotary warbler
  Protonotaria citrea

  STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN
- Prairie false indigo

  Baptisia lactea

  STATE-POTENTIALLY THREATENED



# **Island View Nature Preserve**

is an integral part of the riparian area along the Olentangy River. Riparian areas are the transition zone between fully land and fully aquatic systems. The soil and vegetation are shaped by the presence of water, which enhances plant growth and supports complex food webs.

- Pileated woodpecker
   Dryocopus pileatus
- 2 Common hoptree Ptelea trifoliata
- 3 Meadow fritillary Boloria bellona





# **Kenney Nature Preserve**

features upland forest, forested wetlands and streams that join the Olentangy River. It is estimated Kenney contains 3,850 linear feet of stream. With its wide range of habitat types, this nature preserve supports many populations of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

- 1 Eastern screech owl Megascops asio
- 2 Map turtle Graptemys geographica
- 3 Toadshade Trillium sessile

- Snuffbox mussel
  Epioblasma triquetra
  FEDERALLY-ENDANGERED
- Vidneyshell mussel
  Ptychobranchus fasciolaris
  STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN
- Elktoe mussel

  Alasmidonta raveneliana

  state species of concern



# **Kiwanis Riverway Nature Preserve**

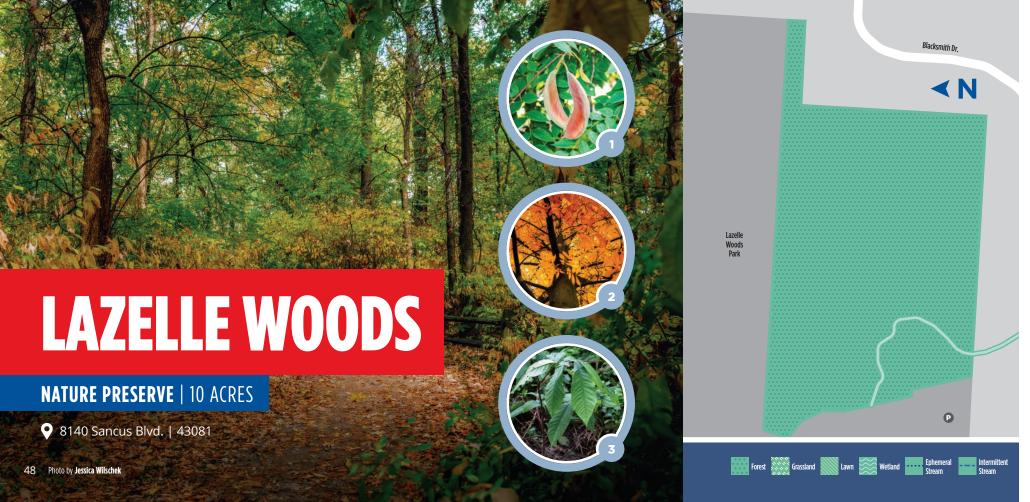
features many habitat types and streams that join Griggs Reservoir. Kiwanis Riverway serves as an easy access point to an area rich in natural beauty and ecological heritage. Walk its wooden boardwalk, and be surrounded by forest, wildflowers and scenic views.

# SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:

# **FEDERAL/STATE LISTED SPECIES:**

- Marsh blue violet
- 2 Scarlet tanager Piranga olivacea
- 3 Muskrat
  Ondatra zibethicus

Rayed bean mussel Villosa fabalis



# **Lazelle Woods Nature Preserve**

features acres of mature forest that support native wildflowers and migrating birds. Lazelle Woods has an abundance of plant diversity, which is correlated with attracting a wide array of wildlife. Located next to Lazelle Woods Community Center, it provides easy access to explore.

- Kentucky coffeetree
   Gymnocladus dioicus
- 2 Bitternut hickory
  Carya cordiformis
- 3 Pawpaw Asimina triloha





# **Mock Nature Preserve**

features wooded ravines, floodplains and streams overlooking Alum Creek. The upland forest is dominated by oak and hickory species that provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife. However, Mock has steep terrain so it may be difficult for some individuals to access.

- Flowering dogwood
   Cornus florida
- **Eastern box turtle** *Terrapene carolina carolina*
- 3 Tulip tree
  Liriodendron tulipifera





# **Mud Hen Marsh Nature Preserve**

features an upland forest, a highquality forested wetland and numerous streams that feed into the Hoover Reservoir. Wetlands are characterized by areas covered or saturated with water. Mud Hen Marsh provides excellent birding opportunities from trails located throughout the preserve.

- Broad-winged hawk

  Buteo platypterus
- 2 Eastern black walnut Juglans nigra
- 3 Magnolia warbler Setophaga magnolia





# O'Shaughnessy Nature Preserve

features upland forest, a pollinator habitat, wetlands and a large pond that joins the Scioto River. Also known as Twin Lakes, it's adjacent to two large lakes and is within a migratory route, supporting over 100 species of migrating birds and 45 species of breeding birds.

- Nilldeer
  Charadrius vociferus
- 2 Ghost pipe Monotropa uniflora
- 3 Great egret
  Ardea alba





# **Overbrook Nature Preserve**

serves as a riparian buffer. This safeguards the Adena Brook ravine by filtering harmful pollutants that could otherwise reach the Olentangy River. The trees and shrubs along the ravine create space between the water and nearby land use, which helps to protect the stream habitat.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

# **FEDERAL/STATE LISTED SPECIES:**

- **River birch** *Betula nigra*
- 2 White breasted nuthatch Sitta carolinensis
- **3 Virginia bluebells** *Mertensia virginica*

Yellow-crowned night-heron
Nyctanassa violacea
STATE SPECIAL INTEREST



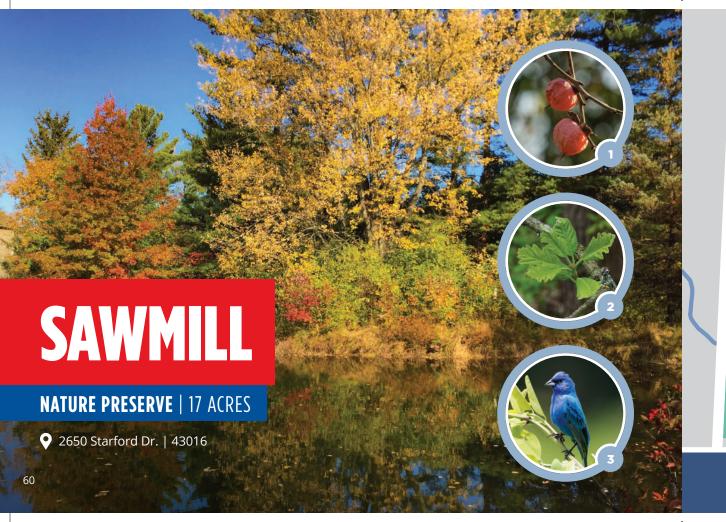
# **Rush Run Nature Preserve**

features wooded ravines, wetlands and streams that join the Olentangy River. Located just south of Antrim Lake within a residential area, the nature preserve retains its natural beauty as a mature forest with diverse plant life.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

- Honey locust Gleditsia triacanthos
- Belted kingfisher Megaceryle alcyon
- Hop hornbeam Ostrya virginiana

- Snuffbox mussel
- Epioblasma triquetra FEDERALLY-ENDANGERED





# **Sawmill Nature Preserve**

includes an emergent and forested wetland, upland forest, grassland and a pond. Throughout the preserve, you can find many hardwood mature trees and vernal pools, also known as seasonal depressional wetlands. The wetlands in Sawmill are dominated by swamp white oak and various sedge species.

- 1 Common persimmon Diospyros virginiana
- 2 Swamp white oak

  Quercus bicolor
- 3 Indigo bunting Passerina cyanea





# **Warner Woods Nature Preserve**

features several vernal pools that serve large populations of early spring amphibians. This nature preserve is uniquely intermixed with the surrounding Warner Woods Park, making this location great for both recreation and conservation.

- Red-headed woodpecker
   Melanerpes erythrocephalus
- 2 Black locust Robinia pseudoacacia
- Western chorus frog
  Pseudacris triseriata





# **Webster Nature Preserve**

is one of Columbus' oldest parks. The land was granted to the City of Columbus in 1909 and in 1926, it was dedicated as a "bird sanctuary and flower preserve." The preserve is a pocket of forested habitat with an unnamed tributary of the Olentangy River.

- Sweetgum
   Liquidambar styraciflua
- 2 Eastern skunk cabbage Symplocarpus foetidus
- 3 Bur oak
  Quercus macrocarpa





# **Woodstream Nature Preserve**

has a diverse understory of trees and high-quality wetlands. This preserve was originally a field that became a meadow before eventually transitioning to a forest, which is an example of ecological succession. This preserve supports an abundance of plants and wildlife.

# **SPOTLIGHT SPECIES:**

- Blue-winged warbler
   Vermivora cyanoptera
- 2 Spicebush
  Lindera benzoin
- 3 Blue-gray gnatcatcher
  Polioptila caerulea

- Kidneyshell mussel
  Ptychobranchus fasciolaris
  state species of concern
- Rainbow mussel

  Villosa iris

  STATE SPECIES OF CONCERN



# **Woodward Nature Preserve**

features a high-quality oak-hickory, beech-maple mature forest.

During spring and summer, the forest floor is covered with a wide variety of wildflowers. The mature forest supports a community of wildlife, including salamanders, warblers, owls and flying squirrels.

- Northern parula
   Setophaga americana
- 2 Woodland sunflower Helianthus divaricatus
- **Wood thrush** *Hylocichla mustelina*



