

## ***Pets in the Parks***

Preservation Parks of Delaware County offers miles of walking trails through native Ohio forests and prairies. The majority of the trails are open for the entire family to enjoy, including the family pet. However, there are rules to bringing pets into the parks. These pet rules have become the most frequently violated of the park rules established by Preservation Parks. The following is a short explanation of the pet rules.

Park Rule 12.1- Pets; No person shall bring into the Park, any pet except domestic dogs or cats. Pets must be controlled at all times in a leash not more than six (6) feet long. No animals are permitted in Park District buildings, unless required for personal assistance due to disability. Owners must remove any fecal material deposited by their animals.

Park Officers encounter visitors with pets in our parks on a daily basis during our patrols. Inevitably, we come across one being walked without a leash, on a leash but running free, or on a leash that is longer than permitted within the Preservation Parks. The common misconception is that the leash law was put into place to protect park visitors from other people's pets. To an extent, that is true, but beyond that, the biggest reason for the leash law is to protect the natural resources contained within the preserves. Pets running loose have been known to disturb or destroy habitat, damage natural features and harass or sometimes kill wildlife. Pets off leash are also apt to becoming victims through chance encounters with wildlife, unimproved areas, and even other pets in the park.

There are also some areas in the parks that are designated pet free zones. Pets are not allowed in the bird sanctuary at Deer Haven Preserve or in Gallant Farm Preserve.

Park Rules are posted and available as pamphlets in the kiosks at each park. They are also viewable on the Preservation Parks website. Mutt Mitts are also provided at each park to help facilitate in cleaning up after your pets. The Preservation Parks Police Department believes in education before enforcement, and we hope that this information provides a better understanding for the reason behind the pet rules. Here is a link to the Park Rules, posted on our website:

<http://www.preservationparks.com/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/park-regs-rules-2011.pdf>

Thank You.

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