

Welcome to our Special Places!

Do you have a place in the forest you think is special? Maybe it's a rock shelter, a secret mushroom patch, or a place you went as a child with your parents.

The Wayne National Forest has several places called Special Areas. They may contain waterfalls or large rock outcrops. They may have endangered, threatened, or rare plants that together form unique plant communities. Sometimes, the plant community isn't only locally unique, it may be one of only a few of its kind found throughout the world. The locally or regionally significant areas may represent a distinct geologic, ecological, or cultural value. They may also be an appropriate area for scientific research.

Designation of Special Areas

Special Areas on the Forest vary from a few acres to several hundred acres in size. Designation is based on significant cultural remains or the unique characteristics of terrain, climate, soil, water, flora, or fauna. All activities in these areas are consistent with the protection or maintenance of the unique characteristics for which an area was designated (e.g., protecting and perpetuating populations of rare plants or communities).

Recreation activities are limited to those consistent with the purpose for which an area was designated. A system of hiking trails may provide access. Evidence of human activities will vary but is generally controlled. Boundaries are located where necessary to protect these significant resources.

Threats from Invasives

In order to protect their special values, these areas are protected. One of the threats

we are most concerned about is the introduction of exotic plant species. These are plants non-native to our area. A common one is Japanese stiltgrass. Japanese stiltgrass is native to Japan, not Ohio. Often exotic plants are unable to survive our winters. However, a plant from a climate similar to southeastern Ohio is likely to thrive.

Some of these plants have no insect predators or diseases in their new habitat so they take over an area and choke out native species. Without natural enemies, invasive plants have an edge over plants native to the area. Since they are not part of the natural balance of the ecological community, invasives can put the whole ecosystem in peril.

How do they get into special areas? Often their seeds come in on wheels, cleats in boots, or horses. Horse manure frequently contains seeds from vegetation the horse has eaten elsewhere. Limiting access by horses, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), mountain bikes, and to people will help keep invasive plants out.

Problems with Erosion

Erosion and loss of soil by wind and rain is also a concern. Erosion begins when vegetation is lost from an area. The plants disappear, the soil begins to erode, and the area impacted expands over time. What was once special and unique, is lost. Erosion can be controlled by prohibiting ATVs, bikes, vehicles, horses, and sometimes people, from the area.

For information on any of these specific areas, contact the Wayne National Forest office responsible for where the area is located (shown in parenthesis after each area description).

Contact Us

The Wayne has three offices to serve visitors. Two offices serve the Athens District. Office hours are 8 - 4:30 Monday through Friday.

Athens Ranger District
13700 U.S. Hwy 33
Nelsonville, OH 45764
Phone: 740-753-0101

Marietta Unit Office
27750 State Route 7
Marietta, OH 45750
Phone: 740-373-9055

Ironton Ranger District
6518 State Route 93
Pedro, OH 45659
(740) 534-6500

Federal relay system for the deaf and hearing impaired: 1-800-877-8339
website: www.fs.usda.gov/wayne



*Paines Crossing Special Area (above)
Front cover photo is Dismal Creek.*

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Special Areas on the Wayne National Forest



America's Great Outdoors

Forest Service

United States Department of Agriculture

Special Areas on the Wayne

Bluegrass Ridge – This area harbors a population of the globally rare juniper sedge. It also contains the State-endangered bigtree plum and Virginia ground cherry and a viable population of the State-rare Cumberland sedge and the State-threatened Carolina thistle. *Ironton RD*

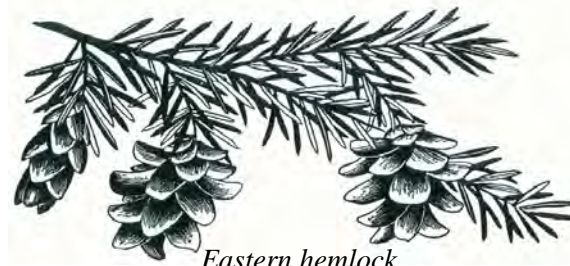
Cambria Creek Wetland – This wetland complex, formed by beaver activity, contains numerous snags. Alder, willow, and buttonbush have become established here. The remains of the Cambria Furnace site are located in this area, giving it historical significance. *Ironton RD*

Caulley Creek – This is a State-significant, mixed mesophytic community with a well represented hickory component (5 species). The understory of sugar maple, red elm, and wild hydrangea is quite dense, and the herbaceous layer of diverse spring flora is characterized by abundant goldenseal. *Ironton RD*

Deadhorse Run – A forested watershed provides opportunities to study changes to terrestrial and aquatic systems as a result of active, natural erosional processes. *Marietta Unit*

Dismal Creek – This scenic area offers visitors the chance for nature viewing and photography. Hemlock regeneration can be studied here since hemlock looper invasion occurred about 1973-1975. *Marietta Unit*

Eels Run – Contains significant populations of Guyandotte beauty at the northern edge of its Appalachian range. In 1990 this species was identified as potentially threatened by the State of Ohio and is considered globally rare. *Athens Unit*



Eastern hemlock

Felter Ridge – An upland forest community of Appalachian oak (chestnut oak, red oak, red maple, sourwood, blackgum) that grades to a mixed mesophytic forest community (red oak, beech, white oak, tuliptree). *Marietta Unit*

Fly Gorge – This deep gorge, with 40-foot cliffs and small waterfalls, contains a State-significant mixed mesophytic forest with gradations into various other upland forest types (facing the Ohio River valley). *Marietta Unit*

Fradd Hollow – Significant for a quality oak barren community (white oak-black oak) and for viable populations of the State-rare butterfly pea, tall nut-rush, and Virginia ground cherry. *Ironton RD*

Handley Branch – Significant quality oak barren community (white oak-black oak) with one of two Ohio populations of the State-endangered blue scorpionweed. Three other rare species include: the endangered Sampson's snakeroot, the State-threatened balsam squawweed, and the potentially threatened lesser ladies' tresses. *Ironton RD*

Lick Branch – A mature hemlock-beech forest, a developing floodplain forest with diverse species, and an emergent marsh with arrowhead, lizard's-tail, burreed, smartweed, and hedge-hyssop. *Ironton RD*

Little Storms Creek – Features a stream, floodplain forest, and locally significant oak-hickory, mixed mesophytic forest communities, and small-flowered alumroot. *Ironton RD*

Minnow Hollow – This is an area of high scenic value. It contains a State-significant mixed mesophytic forest with an abundance of beech and several wet and dry sandstone cliffs. Several State-listed plants occur in this area. Vegetation along the stream is being modified by beavers. *Ironton RD*

Morgan Sisters Woods – Contains a beech-sugar maple communities, much of which has an open park-like understory. *Ironton RD*

Paine Crossing – This oak-maple swamp forest and nearby buttonbush swamp occurs along an abandoned railroad bed and Monday Creek. *Athens Unit*

Rockcamp Run – A native hemlock- white pine- hardwood stand where white pine and Virginia pine occur together. It supports habitat for the globally rare rock skullcap. *Marietta Unit*

Rocky Fork Gorge – A State-significant white pine-hardwood community along a stream which contains a possible oldgrowth and uncut native stand. *Marietta Unit*

Sardis Wetland – This State-significant wetland includes an old growth mixed floodplain forest, an emergent marsh, and a shrub swamp. *Ironton RD*

Thompson Cemetery Woods – The area consists of a State-significant, complex Appalachian oak forest community. *Ironton RD*

Waterfall Cove – A massive and complex sandstone outcrop forms a rockhouse and cliffs that contain large numbers of small-flowered alumroot. A spring-fed stream cascades over the top of the rockhouse, even in the driest of times. *Ironton RD*

Witten Run – A State-significant hemlock-white pine-hardwood community is present on the western slope along Witten Run while a fairly mature, good quality oak-maple community occurs on the north facing slope. *Marietta Unit*

Young's Branch – A State-significant mixed mesophytic forest with large trees and spring coral-root and few-flowered tick-trefoil. *Ironton RD*

Research Natural Areas

Research Natural Areas (RNAs) are nationally significant areas with unique ecosystems deemed worthy of preservation for scientific purposes. Research may be ongoing.

Reas Run Research Natural Area was established in 1975. It is a 78-acre mature Virginia pine stand. Natural succession to climax hardwood forest is imminent and, therefore, of interest to forest researchers. *Marietta Unit*

Buffalo Beats Research Natural Area was established in 1999. It consists of 19 acres with the unique feature of a one-acre relict prairie within a mixed oak forest. Significant plants found at this site include prairie species such as big bluestem, rattlesnake master, stiff goldenrod, slender blazing star, and yellow gentian. *Athens Unit*