



# Discovery News

Winter 2021

## Inside this issue:

Did you know...	2
Park Passes	3
Winter Nights	3
Fun Quiz	4
Contact Information	4



## Cass County Parks

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## From the Director's desk...

As mother nature prepares to lay a snowy blanket of beauty over the bare landscape of Southwest Michigan, I cannot help but reflect on the great challenges and yes, great successes, we realized during this global pandemic year of 2020. Make no mistake about it, like most of the world, we faced uncertainty, adjusted and moved forward. Thanks to the dedication of the county parks staff, guidance of local health officials, county leadership and the leadership of the Cass County Parks and Recreation Commission, we were able to continue serving as we have been for more than 40 years.

To be honest, under normal circumstances 2020 would be considered a year worthy of great celebration due to what has, and will be, accomplished before year's end. Now throw in the challenges of this global pandemic and it is truly remarkable what effort, passion and determination has yielded this year. Some of the highlights include:

- Dr. Lawless Park officially became an International Dark Sky Park and Michigan Dark Sky Preserve.
- Partnered with one Eagle Scout to replace the entrance sign at the Coy-Steiding Campground.
- Partnered with Cairne Stone Adventures/St. Deny's Foundation to host more than 300 hundred participants for the Sandhill Crane ½ Marathon running event.
- Hosted more than 1,500 star gazers for Dark Sky viewing at Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park.
- Created a new five-year community recreation plan for our entire parks system.
- Created a new master plan for Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park.
- Our parks stayed open through the entire pandemic while realizing an estimated 15% increase in visitation and annual pass purchases.

As I said in the past, if nothing else, this pandemic has reinforced the fact that parks, recreation and open spaces are not just a luxury to have when times are good but an essential component to the overall well-being of our community especially when life's challenges are the greatest. In almost every metric that our industry uses to track visitation, numbers are up significantly in 2020 and that certainly is the case for us as well. We are proud to be part of an industry that offers places where you can go to support your physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing.

As always, we wish our community good health and prosperity moving forward. In whatever form it takes, we hope you have a chance to celebrate the holiday season with friends and family in a safe and healthy manner. Your local Cass County Parks will be open sunrise to sunset, seven days a week if you choose to share your time with us.

See you in our parks.....

Director  
 Cass County Parks and Recreation

## Calendar of Events

### at T.K. Lawless Park

Winter Nights—Jan. 23 & 30, Feb. 6 & 13

## Did you know...

# WHERE DO INSECTS GO IN WINTER?

INSECTS DON'T HAVE THE OPTION

OF SIPPING HOT COCOA BY A FIREPLACE LIKE WE DO. INSTEAD, THEY HAVE THEIR OWN, UNIQUE WAYS OF SURVIVING WINTER WEATHER.

TO SURVIVE COLD WINTER WEATHER, MANY INSECTS RESPOND IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:



### COMMUNITY SURVIVAL

INSECTS LIKE HONEY BEES KEEP WARM BY GROUPING THEIR BODY HEAT TOGETHER IN A COMMUNAL LIVING AREA.

### MIGRATION

MONARCH BUTTERFLIES ARE MOST FAMOUS FOR THIS, BUT OTHER INSECTS ALSO RELOCATE TO AREAS WITH BETTER WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR THE WINTER.



### TORPOR

TORPOR IS A TEMPORARY STATE OF IMMOBILITY THAT ALLOWS INSECTS LIKE THE NEW ZEALAND WETA TO TEMPORARILY SHUT DOWN WHEN TEMPERATURES DROP TOO LOW.



### DIAPAUSE

DIAPAUSE IS A LONGER-LASTING STATE OF IMMOBILITY, SIMILAR TO TORPOR, THAT ALLOWS INSECTS LIKE MOSQUITO LARVAE TO DRASTICALLY SLOW THEIR METABOLISM.

### ANTIFREEZING PROTECTION

INSECTS LIKE THE SPRUCE BUDWORM CATERPILLAR NATURALLY PRODUCE MORE GLYCEROL DURING COLDER MONTHS, WHICH PROTECTS THEIR CELLS AND TISSUES FROM FREEZING.



### NATURAL SHELTER

MANY INSECTS, ADULT FEMALE MOSQUITOES INCLUDED, USE PROTECTED AREAS LIKE HOLLOW LOGS OR ANNUAL BURROWS IN ADDITION TO DIAPAUSE TO SURVIVE THE WINTER.

Many insects prepare for winter by creating their own “antifreeze.” During the fall, insects produce more glycerol, which gives their body a “super-cooling ability” by allowing bodily fluids to drop below freezing without causing ice damage. Glycerol also lowers the freezing point, which makes insects more cold tolerant and protects their tissue and cells from ice damage. Their glycerol levels drop again during the spring.

Many mosquito species live through the winter as adults. In the fall, mosquitos mate, but only the male dies. The females spend the cold months hidden in a protected place, such as an animal borrow or hollow log



Sunsets are typically prettier in the winter. Cold, non-humid air is clearer than warm summer air, which allows the colors of the sun to shine through more clearly.

## If you were planning...



If you were planning on setting a world record of people doing snow angels simultaneously you better know a LOT of people! In February of 2007, 8,962 people set the unbeaten world record in Bismark, North Dakota. Now that’s a lot of wings!

## All righty then... how ‘bout a snowman!

Not so easy either.... However it would look awesome in one of our parks! The tallest snow-“woman” was 122’ 1”, made in Bethel, Maine in February 2008. That’s almost as tall as the Statue of Liberty!



**SPECIAL GIFT PRICING ON PARK PASSES!**

While everyone is scratching their heads this holiday shopping season trying to think of the unique gift for that special person in their lives, we've got the perfect idea just for you... a 2021 annual Cass County Parks Pass; a gift that will keep on "giving" for the entire year! Just think, this special offer of a \$12 in-county residents pass (\$22 out-of-county) will give 365 days of enjoyment to someone that loves the outdoors, hiking, biking, disc golfing, running, cross country skiing, bird watching, picnicking with family, tubing, etc. in our very own T.K. Lawless Park, Russ Forest, or the Arthur Dodd Memorial Park. What a great stocking stuffer for that someone that has everything!

Daily entry to the parks is \$2 per resident vehicle (\$3 out-of-county), so for the price of 6 visits, you can visit for the entire year.

Due to Covid restrictions, there may not be anyone in the parks office, but you can take advantage of this offer in the comfort of your own home, by sending a check made payable to Cass County Parks, and send it to 120 N. Broadway, Suite 200, Cassopolis, MI 49031... and we will send YOU the pass! OR... you can visit Dr. Lawless Park and put your check or cash in one of our entry envelopes with your name & address and place it in fee tube.

**This limited time—special price offer ends January 31, 2021!!**



Great FUN in store...

**WINTER NIGHTS 2021**

**January 23 & 30**

**February 6 & 13**

**T.K. Lawless Park**

Monkey Run Street—Vandalia, MI

**5:00—9:00 p.m.**

**\$2.00 per person**

*Based on state and local health guidelines, Covid-19 protocols will be enforced.*

- Join us for:
- Warm fire
  - Lighted tubing hill
  - Lighted cross country trail (3 miles)
  - Biking Trails will be OPEN!!
  - Tractor-pulled bobsled rides
  - Crafts
  - Star gazing demonstration
  - Special Activities
  - And LOTS of FUN!!



**Winter is a GREAT time to enjoy your county parks!**

Winter Night activities are held weather permitting.

Please call 269-445-4456

and listen to the voice message

or check on Facebook

to see if the event is happening!



The Friends of the Cass County Parks will have concessions available for purchase, including some great tasting hot chocolate!



Scott Wyman, Director  
Cass County Parks and Recreation  
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Cassopolis, MI 49031  
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**Tentative Dark Sky Dates**

**January 15 & 16**

**February 12 & 13**

Remember when visiting for dark sky nights, check with Facebook or call the office to make sure weather conditions will allow it, and arrive at least an hour prior to the closing time of midnight.

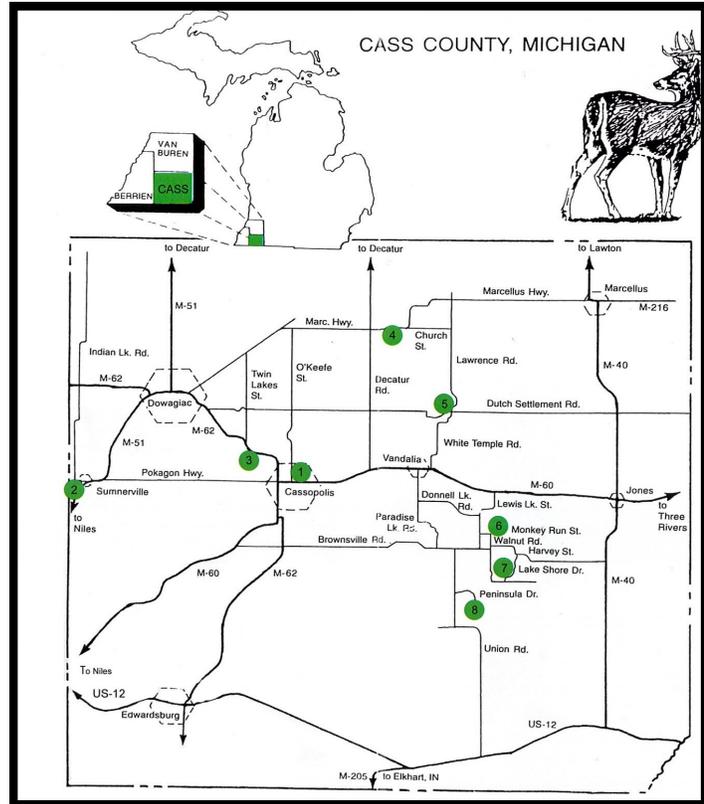
# Cass County Parks & Recreation

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## DISCOVER CASS COUNTY... ONE PARK AT A TIME!



Find us on Facebook: [Casscoparks](#)

### MAP Key

1. Parks Department Office
2. Arthur Dodd Memorial Park
3. Veterans Memorial Park
4. Fred Russ Forest Park
5. Stevens Lakeside Memorial Park
6. Dr. T.K. Lawless Park
7. Henry Sears Boat Launch
8. Harmon Parks



We're on the Web!

[www.casscountymi.org/  
countyparks.aspx](http://www.casscountymi.org/countyparks.aspx)

## MATCH THE SNOW FACTS!

- |                   |   |   |      |
|-------------------|---|---|------|
| 1. SNOWBOARD      | A. The largest on record was 15" wide                 | A | 9-5T |
| 2. SNOW FENCE     | B. Special scales for measuring the depth of snowpack | N | 14-D |
| 3. SNOWMOBILE     | C. Hills of powdery snow formed by the wind           | S | 8-3T |
| 4. SNOWMAN        | D. Its density is determined by visibility            | W | 12-F |
| 5. SNOW BLINDNESS | E. Intentional drifts built to protect roadways       | H | 11-T |
| 6. SNOWFLAKES     | F. No school or work                                  | E | 10-M |
| 7. SNOWDRIFTS     | G. Help your feet stay on top of the snow             | R | 6-K  |
| 8. SNOW CANNONS   | H. Winter weapon of choice for kids                   | S | 8-J  |
| 9. SNOW JOB       | I. Caused by intensified UV rays reflected from snow  | R | 7-C  |
| 10. SNOWPLOW      | J. Create artificial snow                             | S | 6-A  |
| 11. SNOWBALL      | K. A lie  |   | 5-I  |
| 12. SNOW DAY      | L. Frosty   |   | 4-L  |
| 13. SNOW PILLOWS  | M. Clears roadways                                    |   | 3-O  |
| 14. SNOWFALL      | N. Surfs on snow                                      |   | 2-E  |
| 15. SNOW SHOES    | O. Called "snow machine" by Alaskans and others       |   | 1-A  |

