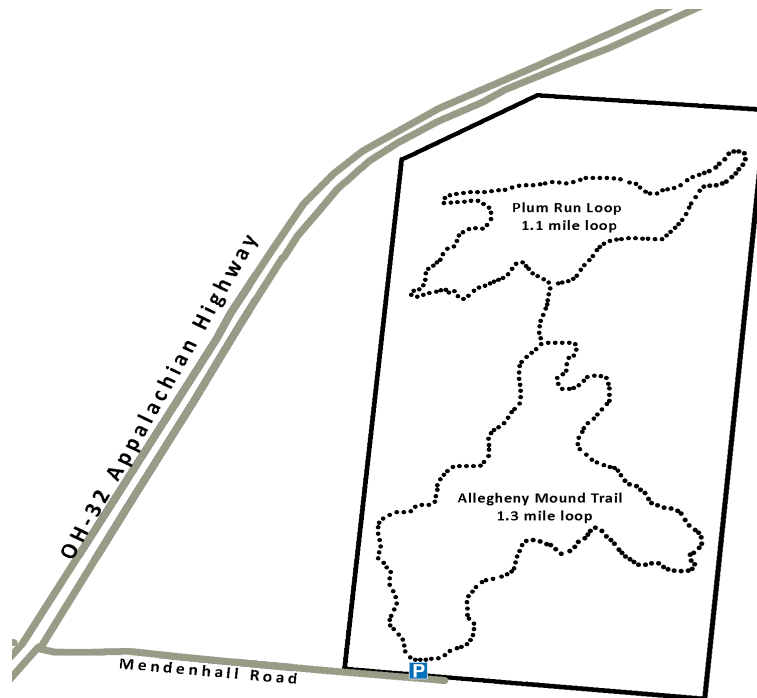




VISITING & HIKING
Plum Run Preserve
Current Size: 138 acres

The Arc of Appalachia's operations are 100% supported by private donations. If you love what we do, [please support us](#) so that our wildlands preservation work and trail stewardship can continue.



Dogs are not permitted at Plum Run Prairie. Please see [Hiking Arc Preserves](#) for dog-friendly trails.

Hiking Trails: Plum Run features two hiking trails.. The **Allegheny Mound Trail 1.3 mile loop** winds through various mosaics of prairie communities. The impressive dwellings of the Allegheny mound builder ants can be seen along the trail. The **Plum Run 1.1 mile loop** traverses a woodlands community with a distinct prairie influence, following along Plum Run's pretty little stream. This rich woodland forest is covered with twinleaf and hepatica in the spring, alongside other wildflowers, and is particularly beautiful to hike in early April.

Plum Run's biological beauty peaks during the following seasonal showcases:

- 1) Early to mid-April** when dense spring wildflowers carpet the woodlands bordering Plum Run's stream.
- 2) Mid-May** when the sunny meadows are filled with showy displays of downy wood-mint and hairy beards-tongue penstemon, and rimmed with yellow sundrops. The rare Henslow's sparrow sings vigorously in the open prairie, while barn swallows swoop and crest over the growing grasses. Watch for returning orchard orioles, indigo buntings, and blue grosbeaks defending their breeding territories.
- 3) Early August** when the prairie flowers are at their peak. Blazing stars burst into bloom, including the impressive prairie dock, its base of large coarse leaves bearing towers of 6-8 foot stems of yellow sunflowers.
- 4) October** when stiff gentian, its flowers with subdued blue-violet hues, lights up the sea of bleached-brown prairie grasses waving in the gales of autumn.

You are Entering a Highly Protected Nature Preserve. Regulations exist to protect natural communities from the impact of public visitors. Please follow them to leave Plum Run Prairie as beautiful as you found it. Remain on trails at all times, walking in single file to protect bulbs of native wildflowers bordering the trail. Do not disturb, pick or collect flowers, plants, rocks, or wildlife. Hunting, caving, fishing, trail biking, rock climbing, wading, campfires, and swimming are prohibited.

Directions: Mendenhall Rd, Peebles, OH 45660

Directions from Peebles: From Peebles, travel 2.0 miles south on OH-41 South to US-32 – the Appalachian Highway. Turn left or east on US-32 for 2 miles. You will pass by the first exit, Steam Furnace Road, and take the second exit, which will be labeled Mendenhall Road. Turn right or south at this exit and follow Mendenhall Road for .4 Miles. The parking lot is on the second property to your left, past the pond on your left. You will see a gravel drive, a trailhead parking lot, and an entrance sign.

Interpretive Kiosk: An interpretive kiosk is situated at the trailhead. We encourage you to take a picture of the trail map with your phone before heading out on the trails.

Plum Run hiking trails are open from sunrise to sunset. Please note parking lots are not winter-maintained and the trails are not safe to hike during periods of heavy rain, ice, and snow. Trails are closed during our annual Deer Management Hunts which take place on 1) the Monday through Sunday following Thanksgiving, and 2) the Saturday and Sunday before Christmas.

Two Distinct Prairie Communities in One. Plum Run is unique in that it protects two distinct but equally rare prairie plant communities: the tall grass prairie and the cedar glade prairie. Both prairie types are now decimated in the Eastern United States by agriculture and have all but disappeared. **Tall Grass Prairies**, known for their towering grasses, produce deep, rich soils that were treasured by pioneer farmers and remain today as some of the best agricultural soils in the world. The tall grass prairie is a fire-sculpted community that originated west of our state and spread fingers into Ohio whenever dryer and hotter climate cycles prevailed. **The Cedar Glade Prairie** is a much older community and likely originated in the South. It almost always grows on thin, extremely poor, dry soils derived from limestone or dolomite bedrock. There are less than 100 known regions where one can find this habitat in the East, and most of the remnants that have survived in these regions are a fraction of an acre in size. In such challenging soil conditions, most trees struggle to survive. The first tree to supplant a cedar glade is the red cedar or juniper tree.

Plum Run Woodlands. The fencerows are dominated by trees that are well adapted to these dry, often alkaline soils, such as Virginia scrub pine, chinquapin oak, and hackberry. Look for interesting shrubs such as fragrant sumac, ninebark, and Carolina buckthorn that flourish here. In the riparian forest, another unusual understory tree can be found – wafer ash or common hop tree. Not a true ash, wafer ash is actually in the citrus family, and its foliage is eaten by the caterpillars of the giant swallowtail. If you are lucky, you may see these immense butterflies nectaring on summer in the open prairie.

A Unique Assemblage of Prairie Plants. Plum Run is home to tall majestic grasses such as Indian grass and big bluestem (borrowed from the tall grass prairie communities of the West). These grasses create the mesmerizing “canopy” that towers over the heads of visitors in late summer and fall. Plum Run also shelters a diverse array of prairie plants that are contributed from the cedar glades of the south. These include American aloe, three blazing star species (*Liatris spicata*, *Liatris aspera*, *Liatris squarrosa*), rattlesnake master, obedient plant, spider milkweed, green milkweed, purple coneflower, and prairie coneflower).