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Nature Trails Still Open, Busy In Winter

Have you taken a winter nature hike along any of the park trails of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority?

"Winter is a good time." says William F. Hopkins, chief naturalist for HCMA. He said that although these trails are not as busy with either human or wildlife traffic as they were in the summer of fall, they are far from deserted in the winter moints.

far from deserted in the wintermonths.
Persons who have walked
the shorter trails in summer
may want to explore the
longer trails such as Habitat
Trail/2.15 miles in Stony Creek
Metropolitan Park near Utica
or Deer Ruft Trail (1.7 miles)
in Kensington Metropolitan
Park near Bufford
There, are also trails at
Hudson Mills Metropolitan
Park near Detect and Lower
Hurion Metropolitan Park near
Belleville.
HOPKINS POINTS out that

HOPKINS POINTS out that the exercise is invigorating, the scenery "when some exerced" super" - and those pesky mosquiloes and deer like of summer are gone. Winter hikers are advised to first stop at the Nature Centers at Stony Creek or Kensington Park to view the special winter exhibits and find out what brigh shave been observed recently along the trails.

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SPRING-FED STREAMS in the nature study area flow all winter long, sparkling in the snow, while the quieter waters of the ponds and swamps have

Hudson Mills Metropolitan Park near Ann Arbor and Lewer Huron Park. THE TRAILS are open cally from 9 a.m. to dusk, except for Stony Creek, where the trails

that have burrowed in the frost-free mud for the winter. Winter is the season for tracking. The snow mantle traces the high-time activities of deer mice, muskrats, rateases the high-time activities of the headers, such as the ruffed grouse, pheasants had squirrest, leave their footprints in the snow, reminding us that life in the wild continues all winter. Trees in winter exchange their green summer rainment for white crystals of snow, ratease of different species of trees are more apparent in the winter—with the fine-textured branches of the hickories. It is a good time to examine the buds of the basswood, hickory and the pointed "ci-gar-like" buds of the American beech.

WHERE NATURE TRAILS go through old fields, the winter hiker' can see how last
summer's wildflowers look
how that the stalks and leaves
have turned brown and the
lobssoms have become seed
capsules. Covered with sparding frost crystals many of
these wild plants have a second season of beauty.

ond season of beauty. Tree carrities that were once hidden by leaves, reveal dwelling places for squirrels or racoons. And on marsh edges the custom-built lodges of the muskrats are apparent, while on sandy ridges persons may see possum or skunk tracks, or red fox tracks identifying the users of dens excavated in the will.

Soll. Hopkins advises winter trail hikers to dress warmly. 'Put on warm socks and overshees, don a cap that can be pulled down over the ears; and button up your warmest jacket or 'maxi coat' and you'll feel a bit more comfortable as you explore the nature trails. These whear-around trails can

explore the nature traits.
These year around trails can
be found at Stony Creek Metropolitan Park near Utica and
Kensington Metropolitan Park
near Milford — which each
have a nature center — or

and nature center are closed ch Mondary.

The nature centers are open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday and week days in the alternoons from in j.m. to 4 p.m. (except at Stony





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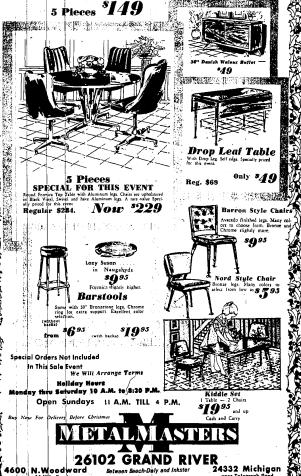
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