

THE FOREST

This woodland historically was known as Graber Woods and was studied by the renowned ecologist, Dr. E. Lucy Braun, who recognized its significance. The largest trees, then and now, are white oaks, red oaks, and hickories. Many of the larger oaks and hickories are now dying out as they have reached the end of their biological lifespans. As these older trees die, they are being replaced by more shade-tolerant trees such as sugar maple and American beech. As a consequence of this natural succession from an oak-hickory community to a beech-maple community, the maples and beeches are becoming more prominent members of the forest at Johnson Woods. In the more poorly drained sections of the woods are found the swamp forest communities dominated by red maples and pin oaks. Several buttonbush swamps may also be found in depressional areas which are frequently associated with the swamp forest community.

In addition to its importance as one of the few old growth forest stands remaining in Ohio, Johnson Woods is also significant for its size. At 206 acres, Johnson Woods is large enough to act as a self-supporting ecosystem. Its large size makes it less vulnerable to storm damage and threats from disease. Birds such as the pileated woodpecker, scarlet tanager, Acadian flycatcher, wood thrush, ovenbird, and hooded warbler are found nesting at Johnson Woods along with many other species that are dependent upon larger tracts of forests. In an area of Ohio where large woodlots of any age class



are rare, Johnson Woods' size, age and history combined make it one of the most significant forest communities in Ohio.

An impressive display of wildflowers flourishes in the spring, including trout lilies, large-flowered trillium, several species of violets, and windflower. Summer brings the cathedral-like canopy of leaves, which becomes more colorful as autumn has its affect on the woods. Winter emphasizes the massive trunks and the height of the huge trees. We hope you enjoy your visit to Johnson Woods State Nature Preserve.

STATE NATURE PRESERVES

Dedicated state nature preserves represent the finest examples of Ohio's natural features. Public visitation is encouraged but closely regulated to protect the natural integrity of the preserve so that it may be passed on, unimpaired, to future generations. Please help protect this special place by observing the rules and regulations posted near the entrance. Please hike only on the boardwalk. Off-trail use and collecting are prohibited, unless a written permit is obtained from the Division.