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OAK OPENINGS REGION BLUE WEEK FACT SHEET

Oak Openings Region History

At the end of the last glacier period, a large lake covered portions of NW Ohio and SE Michigan. That lake deposited sand along its shores. After the waters receded, the sand dunes left behind developed into oak savanna. The low-lying areas in between the dunes held water throughout much of the year and became lakeplain wet prairie. This area is called the Oak Openings Region. See a map of the region at <https://www.oakopenings.org/about/history/>

Over 99% of oak savannas, flatwoods and wet prairies have now been lost from the lakeplain. The small pieces that remain are referred to as “remnants” and are among the rarest natural communities on the planet. Many of the animal species that depend on them are also very rare.

The Nature Conservancy, a renowned conservation organization, has designated this globally distinct region as “one of the last 200 great places on earth”.

Green Ribbon Initiative

GRI is a partnership of conservation groups working together since 2000 to protect the natural beauty and biological diversity of the Oak Openings Region with the support of public and private organizations, landowners and individuals.

Originally formed in Northwest Ohio, the partnership now includes partners in Southeast Michigan.

The collective goal of the Oak Openings Green Ribbon Initiative is to protect and restore approximately 6,800 acres in the next ten years. Achieving this goal will help threatened and endangered species to survive and will revitalize human communities by filtering drinking water, improving the health of Lake Erie and making our communities more livable.

For more information, visit www.oakopenings.org/

Oak Openings Blue Week

An event sponsored by the Oak Openings Green Ribbon Initiative and its partners to give the public a chance to experience the natural wonders of the Oak Openings Region firsthand.

Blue Week is named for blue species in the Oak Openings that reveal themselves in Spring (e.g. bluebirds, blue-herons, blue-spotted salamanders, wild blue lupine, big bluestem grass).

Over 20 activities, events, workshops and hikes May 13-20, 2018.

The goal is to showcase the beauty of the Oak Openings Region and inspire home-based and collaborative conservation by businesses, organizations and individual landowners.

Full calendar of events at www.oakopenings.org/blue-week