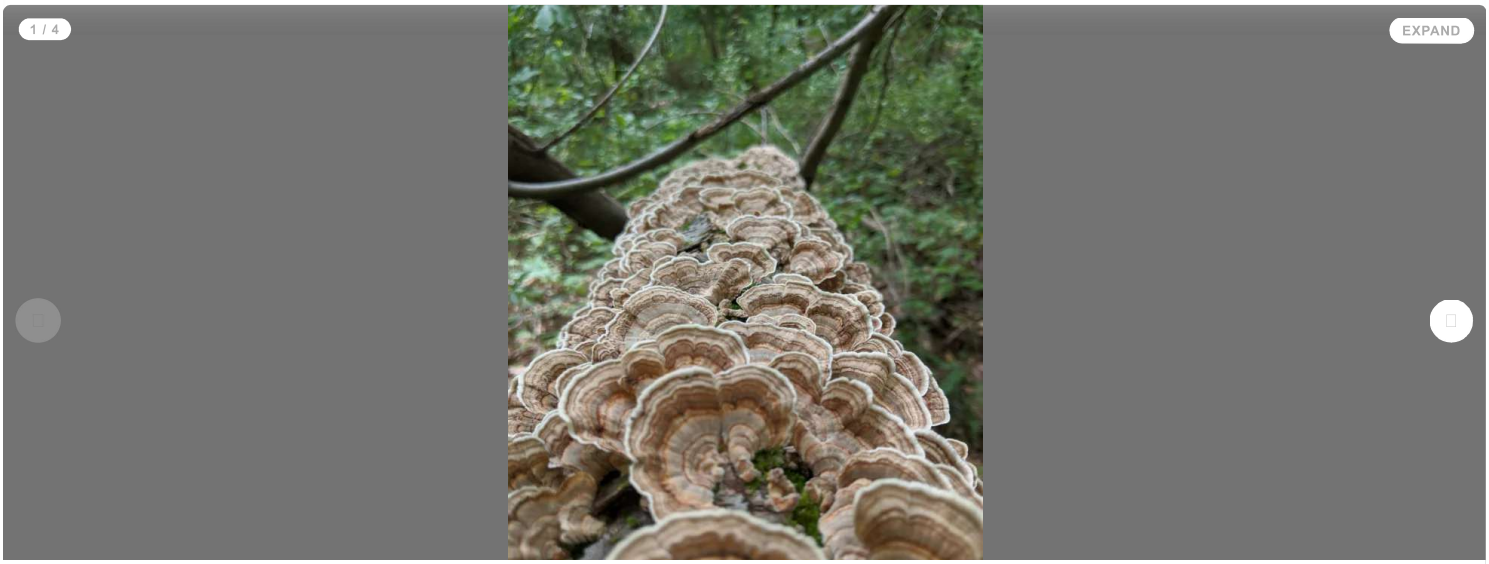
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LOCAL NEWS

# Jefferson County preserve opens window into local ecosystem

By **LINDA HARRIS** July 30, 2026 3 min read




Contributed RIDGE WALK — Mushrooms dot the landscape at Quaker Ridge Nature Preserve in Richmond, where visitors can explore the area's diverse plant and fungal life during a guided nature walk.

RICHMOND -- Ohio State University Extension and the Jefferson Soil & Water Conservation District are teaming up for a guided nature walk -- a three-quarter-mile tour of the Quaker Ridge Nature Preserve.

From 5-7 p.m. today, OSU Extension's Erika Lyon and SWCD staff will lead area residents on what they are calling a "Forest Walk and Fungus Foray," pointing out trees, mushrooms and flowers of interest along the way.

The guided walk begins at 5 p.m. and will last about 40 minutes. SWCD Projects Manager Aaron Dodds said it is peak season for mushrooms, so they will be a priority.

"But if we see wildlife, wildflowers and anything interesting, we will show it, too," he said, adding the Fungus Foray "is a great opportunity for the public to come out and get a glimpse of Quaker Ridge Preserve, which is under construction."

Quaker Ridge is located at 5105 state Route 152, Richmond.

"Quaker Ridge is one of the four preserves that Soil and Water has in Jefferson County, and it's a hidden jewel," he said. "It has a diverse ecosystem with mature woods, small streams and waterfalls, grasslands and a large beaver meadow."

Dodds said the Quaker Ridge property is rich with different types of fungus and plant life that many people may not realize are native to Jefferson County.

"The array of colors and textures is astounding and mesmerizing," he said. "And Erika has such an amazing and deep knowledge of the fungus, and it's so fascinating to learn what she has to say on the subject. Jefferson Soil and Water staff will be talking about the property and the diversity that is there."

Dodds described Quaker Ridge as "a true jewel in the heart of the county, a former Underground Railroad station that was donated to the county by a landowner that wanted to protect the ecosystem found there and the richness of the county."

"It's a great opportunity for people to come and be immersed in nature," he said. "We hope people join us for this walk and get to see this beautiful property and get a glimpse behind the construction curtain."

Dodds said Quaker Ridge is a great property that "has the flat grasslands, the switchback trail and old logging road that descend down the hill through the forest into a large beaver meadow rich with wildflowers, pollinators and a diverse bird population."

"We're excited for the sneak peek at Quaker Ridge Preserve," he added. "The rich history, vast array of plants and wildlife, and the rugged beauty of the land encapsulates the very essence of Jefferson County."