

Hiking Innovation Hills in July

The Oakland Owlet's Families and Friends visited Innovation Hills Park in Rochester Hills for a morning bird walk on Sunday, July 12. Owlet mom and avid birder, Melanie Mitchell guided the group along the trails at Innovation Hills. It is a local birding spot for Melanie where she spends time with her family.

Innovation Hills is owned and managed by the City of Rochester Hills. It is 110-acre park bordered by the main branch of the Clinton River to the north. The park protects both sides of the Clinton. Forty-eight acres of the park north of the River is designated as Green Space. Formally known as River Bend Park, the park was renamed in 2017.

Since its renaming Innovation Hills has been designed and redeveloped to be a regional park unlike anything else in southeast Michigan. The park has universal design elements on the trails that are accessible to all visitors. A local architectural and engineering firm created a park design with green space protections and sustainability features. The design serves the entire community with multigenerational recreation activities.



Birding in July can be challenging, but the Owlets were able to spot 34 species, walking a mile along the trails with Melanie's expert guidance. Birds benefit from the green space and sustainability elements of this park.



Some of the notable species seen during the hike include Cedar Waxwing, Green Heron, Great-crested Flycatcher and Chimney Swift. An eBird Checklist for this hike is available upon request. It was a good morning to be outdoors and a great local place to see birds.

Participants gathered for a group photo at the hike's conclusion. A special thank you to Melanie Mitchell for leading this hike and sharing this special park with the OBA Owlets.



Photo Credits – Melanie Mitchell, OBA Photo Gallery and Hubbell, Roth & Clark.