

# Conservatory Internship at Miller Nature Preserve

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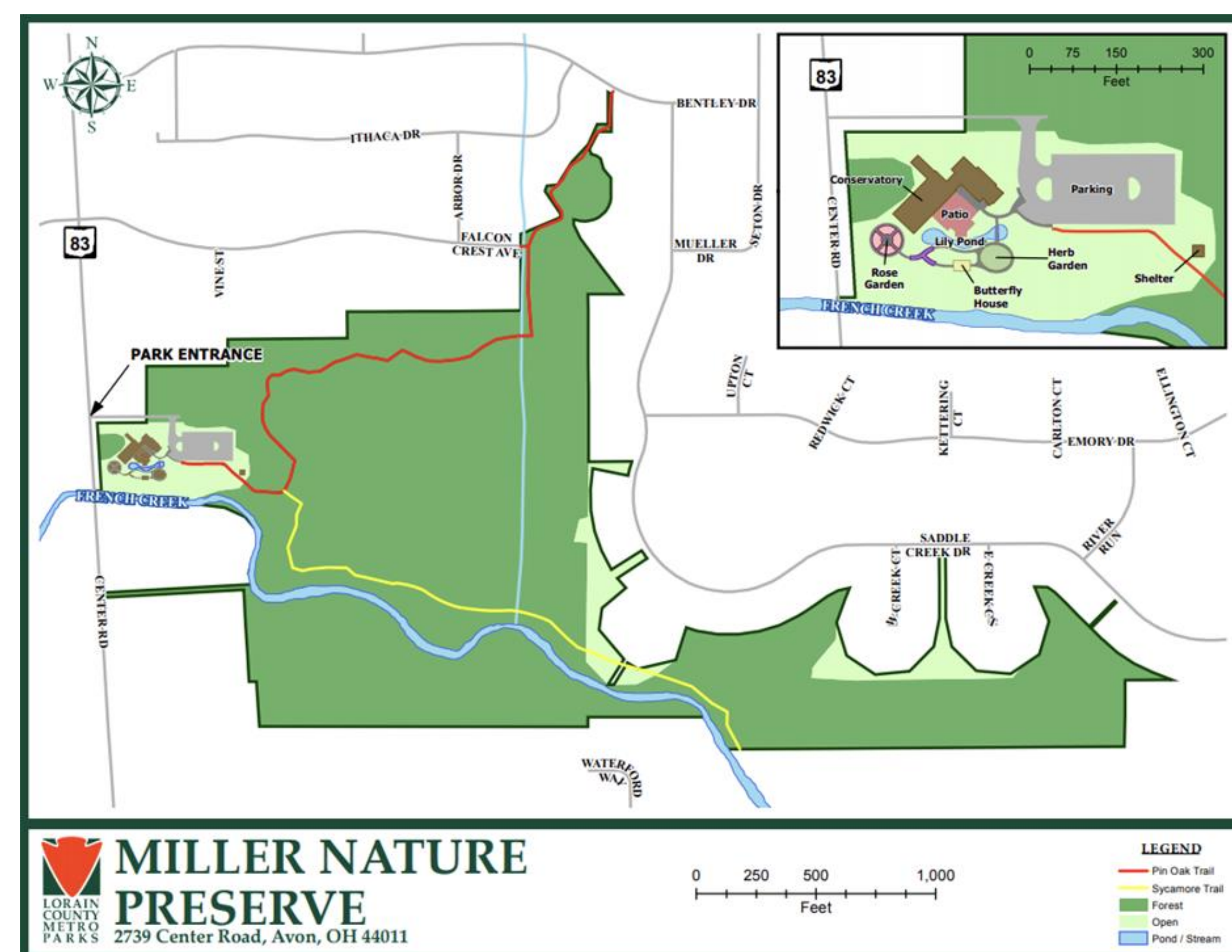
## Lorain County Metro Parks

This summer, I did a park service training internship with Lorain County Metro Parks at Miller Nature Preserve in Avon Ohio. I'm lucky to have found this opportunity on Indeed.com, and I sent my application directly to the park where I was then interviewed in person.

### Mission Statement

*"The Lorain County Metropolitan Park District was established for the responsible use, enjoyment, and accessibility of every citizen of Lorain County. The Park District acquires land to promote and demonstrate the wise use of our natural resources. The Park District Strives to preserve and create a diversity of ecosystems while providing educational and recreational Opportunities which are compatible with and promote the conservation of these resources."*

### Map of Miller Nature Preserve



## About the Park

Miller Nature preserve lays on 145 acres of woodland, preserving native species and connecting suburban developments to the park. There is a 5,000 square foot nature conservatory with plant species from around the world including tropical plants, orchids, succulents, arid plants, and bonsai trees. The park also features a seasonal butterfly house, gift shop, event hall, and a café with indoor and outdoor seating

## Conservatory



### On the Job

Working at Miller Nature preserve was both physically and mentally engaging. No day was the same at Miller this summer, and the work changed throughout the season. Some of the work I did in the conservatory was:

- Watering plants based on their specific needs
- Sweeping the conservatory floors and cleaning up beds
- Daily misting air plants, orchids, and bonsais
- Repotting and transplanting different specimen
- Propagating plants
- Pest identification and management
- Fertilizing bonsais and orchids weekly
- Trimming, pruning, repotting, and wiring bonsai trees
- Companion planting and plant identification



The picture on the left is in the tropical portion of the conservatory, you can see a banana tree, bromeliads, monstera and rubber plant in the background. The picture on the right is in the arid room of the conservatory, you can see multiple different cacti specimen. This is just a snapshot of the conservatory, there is much more to see!

## Accomplishments

- ✓ Created a sustainability report for Miller Nature Preserve
- ✓ Planted annual flower beds
- ✓ Edged garden beds and around trees
- ✓ Pruned and trimmed trees, bushes, and roses
- ✓ Planted flowerpots and displayed them
- ✓ Started making bouquets for the front desk
- ✓ Sawed down a tree that fell on the pathway
- ✓ Got Bonsai trees show ready and up for display
- ✓ Set up the new butterfly house with mulch and plants
- ✓ Pin up chrysalis in the butterfly house
- ✓ Caught butterflies and released them into the butterfly house

### Bouquet and Buckeye Butterfly



## Bonsai

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to learn the art of Bonsai at Miller Nature Preserve during my summer internship! I fell in love with tiny trees, and I hope to grow my own Bonsai trees some day. It's satisfying and relaxing to shape and train miniature trees. Here is the before and after picture of the moss companion planting, I did on a Juniper Bonsai.



## Sustainability at Miller Nature Preserve

I made Miller Nature Preserve a sustainability report to address sustainability related goals and guide sustainability efforts. Although this was not something I was asked to do, it was a great exercise for me to apply my learning to this internship experience. I based my sustainability report off the United Nations 17 goals for sustainable development. You can check out my Sustainability report on my u.osu.edu blog at: <https://u.osu.edu/dent.92/2021/10/01/summer-internship-miller-nature-preserve-2021-sustainability-report/>



## Reflection

I had an amazing internship with Lorain County Metro Parks at Miller Nature preserve. I really enjoyed learning so much about plants and butterflies and taking care of them. I also enjoyed sharing my knowledge with the visitors at Miller Nature Preserve. I could see myself working in a conservatory setting or with the metro parks after graduation! I would recommend other students to follow their passion and find an internship they love!

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** Thank you so much to everyone from Lorain County Metroparks who made this internship such an educational and rewarding experience. A big thankyou to my parents as well for making this possible for me. I love you all!