



*2017 Wildflower
Walkabout Series*
Co-Sponsored by:
Natural Land Institute
Severson Dells Nature Center
Explore North Central Illinois



SDNC: 815/335-2915 ■ NLI: 815/964-6666
All walks begin at 6:00 p.m.

Come experience the north central Illinois landscape. Walk where flowers carpet the forest floor and birds fill the air. Severson Dells Nature Center and the Natural Land Institute are the organizing agencies of the event, with local groups providing leaders from their organizations.

Wednesday, April 26 Anna Page Park

Barbara Williams from the North Central Illinois Ornithological Society will lead this walk and we will meet at the second parking lot along Kent Creek for a tour of wildflowers and birds at this Rockford Park District property. We will travel through a variety of natural communities, from creek bottoms to maple forest, and may view depending on the spring we are having marsh marigolds, trillium, blue-eyed Marys and numerous other spring wildflowers. Moderate hiking with wet areas.

Tuesday, May 2 Pecatonica River Forest Preserve

Don Miller, retired executive director of Severson Dells Nature Center, will take us on a tour of the Pecatonica River Forest Preserve which includes creekside and river edge floodplain forest, several old field meadows, gorges and upland forest sites. Within its 55-acre Nature Preserve lies an oxbow lake with a minimally disturbed mesic forest with several species of unique flora. Meet at the picnic shelter house off of Brick School Road. Hiking will be easy to moderate.

Wednesday, May 10 Piscasaw Fen Conservation Area

Join volunteer Brian Hale on a hunt for spring wildflowers in the fen and oak savanna habitats of the Piscasaw Fen. Participants will also see the habitat restoration that is in process at this Boone County Conservation District site. The Piscasaw Fen Area is located at the south end of Norris Lane. Norris Lane runs south off of Edson Road. Edson Road is just south and east of the Village of Poplar Grove. Easy hiking.

Tuesday, May 16 Howard D. Colman Dells Nature Preserve

Greg Keilback of Severson Dells Nature Center will lead this hike on property owned and managed by NLI. This 55-acre Nature Preserve is located along Hall Creek, southwest of Rockford. One of the attractive features of this preserve is a series of cliffs known as the dells. Many unique plants restricted to limestone and dolomite outcrops are found here, as well as some northern relict plants. The floral display in the upland woods is one of the best in Winnebago County. Aldo Leopold and Paul Riis conducted some early deer studies in this preserve in the mid 1930's. Located near the intersection of East Severson Road and North Weldon Road. From Meridian and Montague Road, drive south and turn west onto McGregor Road, turn north onto Weldon Road. Moderate-difficult hiking.



Wednesday, May 24 Rotary Forest Preserve

Jerry Paulson, former executive director of Natural Land Institute, will lead this tour through the limestone ravines, extreme topography, and the beautiful Kishwaukee River Valley. Botany and geology will be braided together to explain the great variety of plant life found there. 5390 Rotary Road, Cherry Valley, between I-39 and Mulford Road. There will be many scenic views of the river on this moderate to difficult hike.

Tuesday, May 30 Colored Sands Forest Preserve

Join Sand Bluff Bird Observatory's naturalists Lee and Lynda Johnson for a wildflower walkabout tour of the beautiful sand country at Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve. The vegetation is unique to dry sand prairies, which once dominated the area but now are very rare. This easy level walk will be a great hike for beginners as well as the experienced. Bring a wildflower book, binoculars, and bug spray. Meet at the Banding Station parking lot at the end of Haas Road near Durand.

Wednesday, June 7 Kieselburg Forest Preserve

Eric Bednar, with the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, will lead this field trip to discover the natural beauties of native prairie remnants and restorations of North Central Illinois. Tour many prairie and sedge meadow types from dry to wet. Kieselburg is located at 5801 Swanson Road in Roscoe. Hiking will be moderate.

Tuesday, June 13 Harlem Hills Prairie Nature Preserve

Gary and Judy Anderson will offer their guidance on this visit to Harlem Hills Prairie. If the season is progressing typically, the hills should be pink/purple with thousands of Pale Purple Coneflowers. Always a great place to see a sunset. Meet on Flora Drive in Loves Park. Easy hiking.

Wednesday, June 21 Jarrett Preserve Nature Preserve

Join Byron Forest Preserve Education Superintendent Mark Herman to search the prairies for wildflowers on this first day of summer. We will meet at the Jarrett Prairie Center, 7993 N. River Rd. in Byron and explore this unique site with surface dolomite exposure. Please bring comfortable hiking shoes and binoculars if you're interested in seeing summer resident beauties. This will be an easy hiking adventure.

Tuesday, June 27 Searls Prairie Nature Preserve

Jack Armstrong, Rockford Park District board member, and Nathan Hill, RPD Natural Areas Supervisor, will take us on this hike to Searls Prairie, owned by the Rockford Park District. It is dominated by mesic and wet-mesic prairie where prairie dropseed, Indian grass, big bluestem and little bluestem grow. The site is one of the highest quality wet prairies in the state and will be full of bloom. Located on Central Avenue in Rockford. Meet across from soccer fields on south side of road. Easy hiking, but the area may be wet.

