

A NATURE PRESERVE ETHIC

WALK QUIETLY

So as not to disturb others—animals or humans.

PICK NO FLOWERS

So they may form seeds and so others can enjoy their beauty. Also, pick no plant parts.

TREAD LIGHTLY

Stay on area trails or in designated study areas.

RESPECT ALL LIVING THINGS

Do not disturb wildlife or their homes.

TAKE ONLY MEMORIES

Leave only footprints. Do not collect anything except litter.



ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVE
EVERYTHING IS PROTECTED BY LAW

TAMARACK VIEW TRAIL



VOLO BOG STATE NATURAL AREA
28478 W. BRANDENBURG RD.
INGLESIDE, IL 60041
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AN ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES SITE
PRINTING FUNDED BY THE FRIENDS OF VOLO BOG

2.75 miles around the periphery of Volo Bog's kettle hole basin. Named for the tamarack trees visible in the distance from various points along the trail, TVT passes through a variety of habitats including woodland, prairie, marsh and old fields. The hilly terrain makes for moderate hiking.

Watch for flat, green lettered posts along the way and refer to this brochure to read about the ecology, plants and animals of the area. This brochure also gives tips for observing wildlife along the way.



For a comprehensive look at specific plants and animal life of Volo Bog State Natural Area (VBSNA), you may want to refer to these VBSNA brochures:

Plants of Volo Bog

Mammals

A Checklist of Birds

Reptiles and Amphibians

Threatened and Endangered Species

Trees of Volo Bog

This area takes its name from the familiar mammal that is often seen scurrying around on the woodland floor. Chipmunks will occasionally climb the oaks and box elder trees that are common in this area. If you sit quietly for a few minutes (for kids, try a number of minutes equal to your age!) mammals can become accustomed to your presence and will go about their routines. Keep this in mind as you observe animal behavior, especially of mammals. You will be rewarded!



POST B. EVIDENCE OF A GLACIER

This small hill is a kame formed when rock, sand and gravel washed through a hole in the melting ice of the receding Wisconsin Glacier. Past owners mined small amounts of gravel for their needs.

As you walk along the top of the kame up ahead, listen to the cottonwood trees as their leaves shake with the wind. Like aspen trees, cottonwood petioles (leaf stems) are flat, giving them their characteristic quaking with the slightest breeze.



Today, a restored prairie just past the woods provides habitat for a variety of wildlife. Look for signs of raccoons and groundhogs including ground holes and scat. Watch and listen for goldfinches, downy woodpeckers and chickadees which are often seen foraging for insects or seeds.

POST C. LANDSCAPE RESTORATION

The contours of the land have been restored to this area. While early attempts (in the 1940's—60's) to drain Volo Bog's basin for a golf course failed, the land was left in a disrupted mess. Recontouring allowed for the planting of native prairie and wetland species which are helping to heal the wounds.

Stop at the observation platform that was funded by The Friends of Volo Bog for a good view of the wetlands. Do a sound count by silently pausing for 60 seconds. How many different sounds did you hear? Then move along quietly to watch for waterfowl and other birds and wildlife both here and as you enter the woods.



POST D. OAK-CHERRY WOODLANDS

Oak and hickories used to dominate much of the woodlands in western Lake County. Although you can find plenty of oak and some hickory trees here, cherries have become more common than the hickories here. Most of the largest trees in our area are less than 150 years old as American settlers cleared most of them to build farms and towns. The fruits and nuts

From these trees provide food for deer, squirrel and even wild turkey. Even though the turkeys nearly disappeared from the area years ago, their numbers have been increasing in northern Illinois. Maybe you could spot one!



POST E. NON-NATIVE INVADERS

An old field is in transition in this area. Many of the pioneer species (those first to arrive in a disturbed area) are non-native and invasive.

The native sumac is joined by autumn and Russian olive, both recognized by their silvery leaves, European buckthorn with toothed alternative leaves, and Japanese honeysuckle, noted with its paired leaves on tan, ragged branches. The native red cedar have become more common. The forbs (non-woody plants) are a mix of goldenrods, milkweeds, non-native thistles, and multi-flora rose. Fire and prairie planting may eventually work to restore this area as time and budgeting allows.

POST F. WALNUTS & WILLOWS

You're walking through a stand of walnut and willow trees before you cross over a marsh. What wildlife could live here?

Humans are not the only critters who use the boardwalk, so watch for evidence of those who are nearby. Listen for red-winged blackbirds "oak-alee"ing and the "mew" of a catbird. Long-horned grasshoppers are heard from August through the first hard frost. Their "call" has been likened to the sound of an oscillating lawn sprinkler! Can you find one hiding behind a cattail leaf? Can you see it make its sound?

As you exit the boardwalk, look for the quaking aspen trees with their shimmering leaves.

POST G. VOLO BOG IN THE DISTANCE

If you stop at the bench to take in the view before you, be aware that there are multiple habitats. Notice the tamarack trees rising from the bog in the distance (If you were standing on a clock, look towards 10:00), the forest off to the right, the hillside prairie farther out, and the marsh directly in front of you. Sit and soak in a few peaceful moments while watching and listening for the multitude of species that call this place home.

POST H. PRAIRIE VIEW

The restored prairie rolling from the path and up the hillside allows you to see a sampling of prairie plants such as big bluestem, Indian grass, prairie dock, obedient plant and rattlesnake master. Imagine being a pioneer, and travelling through tall prairie grasses that tower high above your head! These plants evolved with fire on the prairie. Up to two-thirds of most prairie plants are roots, twisting deep

underground to reach water and survive the fires, which kept the shrubs and trees at bay. Are the birds different here? How about the insects? Watch for butterflies sipping nectar from the flowers. Stop and smell the flowers for yourself, too!



POST I. REMNANT SAVANNAH

Savannahs occur where the forest and prairie meet. The trees are farther apart and generally fire resistant. The mighty bur oak was and still is the sentinel of the savannah. Protected from fire by its thick, corky bark, it is easily recognized by its gnarly branches and leaves sporting a pair of deep sinuses (the indentations between the lobes) on each side of the leaf.

POST J. NEARBY NOISE

The frequent beeping and clanking disturbance you may hear is from a cement recycling and clean fill dumping ground. Those who know and love Volo Bog are concerned that the ever-increasing clean fill pile that is now shrouded by trees will soon tower over the bog, further disrupting the beauty of this otherwise peaceful place.

Look closely to see how many different birds, reptiles, mammals, amphibians and reptiles may pass by. Beaver and muskrats live in this moat on the outer edge of the glacial kettle. Watch for them, mostly submerged except for their heads, with eyes on top like periscopes. The larger beaver uses logs and large sticks for building while the muskrat carries cattails. Both are constructing their lodges. Can you spot a lodge? Only the beaver builds a dam.

POST L. FIRE IN THE WOODS

Look carefully and notice the burned stumps within these woods. Although less frequent than in prairies, fire used to be a natural part of the woodland landscape. Clearing patches of the underbrush, fire gave woodland wildflowers the space and light needed to thrive. With the building of artificial firebreaks such as roads and green lawns, and people's tendency to put out fires, non-native invasive shrubs such as honeysuckle and buckthorn have been invading native habitats throughout the U.S. The prescribed burns here have allowed sedges, shooting stars, wild geraniums and other wildflowers to stage a comeback.



Planted in the 1960's, these Scotch pines (a.k.a. Scots pines) are also a non-native species. Unlike buckthorn, they are less invasive and fire keeps the seedlings from becoming established.

Owl pellets are occasionally found among the pine cones. Look for these coughed up packets of fur and bones. They contain clues about what small mammals live in the area.



You may want to pause once again to share and contemplate the many wonders of Tamarack View Trail.

Thank you for taking the time to observe and enjoy. Do come again!



What did you see?

What did you hear?

What was the best part of today's adventure?

Tell someone else, so they can come here, too!

This brochure was written & designed by Volo Bog Naturalist Stacy Iwanicki with inspiration from Corinne Smith, and updated in 2018 by Mary Colwell. Diana Maxwell contributed the artwork.