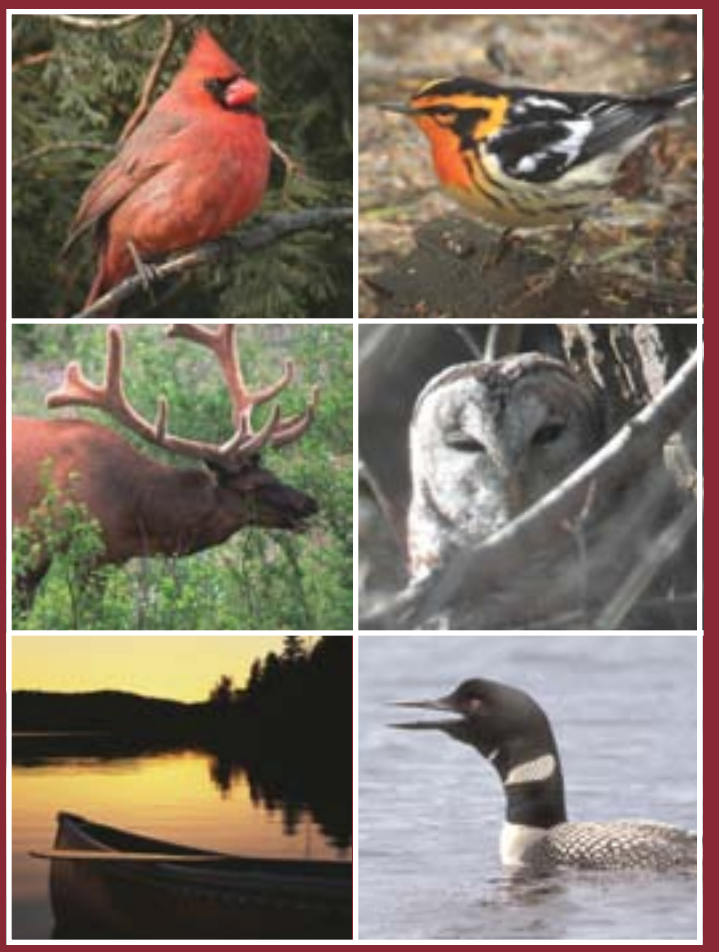
Great Wisconsin Birding & Nature Trail

Lake Superior Northwoods Region



GREAT WISCONSIN BIRDING AND NATURE TRAIL

Welcome

Welcome to Wisconsin where a wonderful world of wildlife watching awaits you.

Environmental tourism has become an important part of our diverse mix of outdoor recreation. Extensive wetlands, millions of acres of wild places, a broad range of natural habitat, and a commitment to environmental stewardship have made Wisconsin an outstanding regional birding opportunity. More than any other state in the Great Lakes basin, Wisconsin is positioned to promote and enjoy this popular activity.

To that end, we have launched the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail. This project divides the state into five wildlife-viewing regions. Driving trails, linking important wildlife sites within each region, are being developed. Over five years, the program will produce a series of birding guides to these regions – one each year. This is the first, a guide to the Lake Superior/Northwoods Region.

We hope you enjoy it.

Jim Doyle, Governor

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Wing your way through Wild Wisconsin

The *Great Wisconsin Birding Guide and Nature Trail* is your invitation to observe the fascinating and diverse world of wildlife that exists in every corner of the state.

Over the next four years, the Wisconsin DNR Endangered Resource Program will develop a series of five highway-based viewing guides, each highlighting unique regional ecosystems of Wisconsin. Each will link a set of waypoints, refuges and wild places that offer the best birding and wildlife watching opportunities.

This is the first of those five guides; the Lake Superior/Northwoods Birding and Nature Trail. It covers Wisconsin's eighteen northern counties. Opened in 2004, it includes 88 waypoints from the twenty-one pristine Apostle Islands to the one million acres of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.

In 2005, the Mississippi/Chippewa Rivers Birding and Nature Trail will debut followed in successive years by the Lake Michigan, Central Sands Prairie and Southern Savanna Trails.

Waypoints on each trail will be marked with the program's distinctive Sandhill Crane logo. As you travel, watch for these signs – they are your invitation to the fascinating world of Wisconsin wildlife.

Top photo, Clay colored sparrow by Mike McDowell. Bottom, waypoint marker.

Using the Guide

Information for this guide was gathered locally from Wisconsin DNR and federal Forest Service personnel, from naturalists, birders, and a range of wildlife enthusiasts. Each site was nominated locally and evaluated as part of the regional project.

Site information includes a contact phone number, driving directions, a small locator map, a description of the project, common and rare birds and wildlife, and a Web site if available. Except as noted, admission to these properties is free. Hours are included, even though most properties are open 24/7.

As you would expect, most of these waypoints are remote, wild locations. While every effort has been made to provide accurate driving instructions, we recommend that you bring a county map or gazetteer to help in finding these sites. Other prudent equipment would include a compass, flashlight, water, a granola bar, insect repellant, and a good pair of walking/hiking shoes.

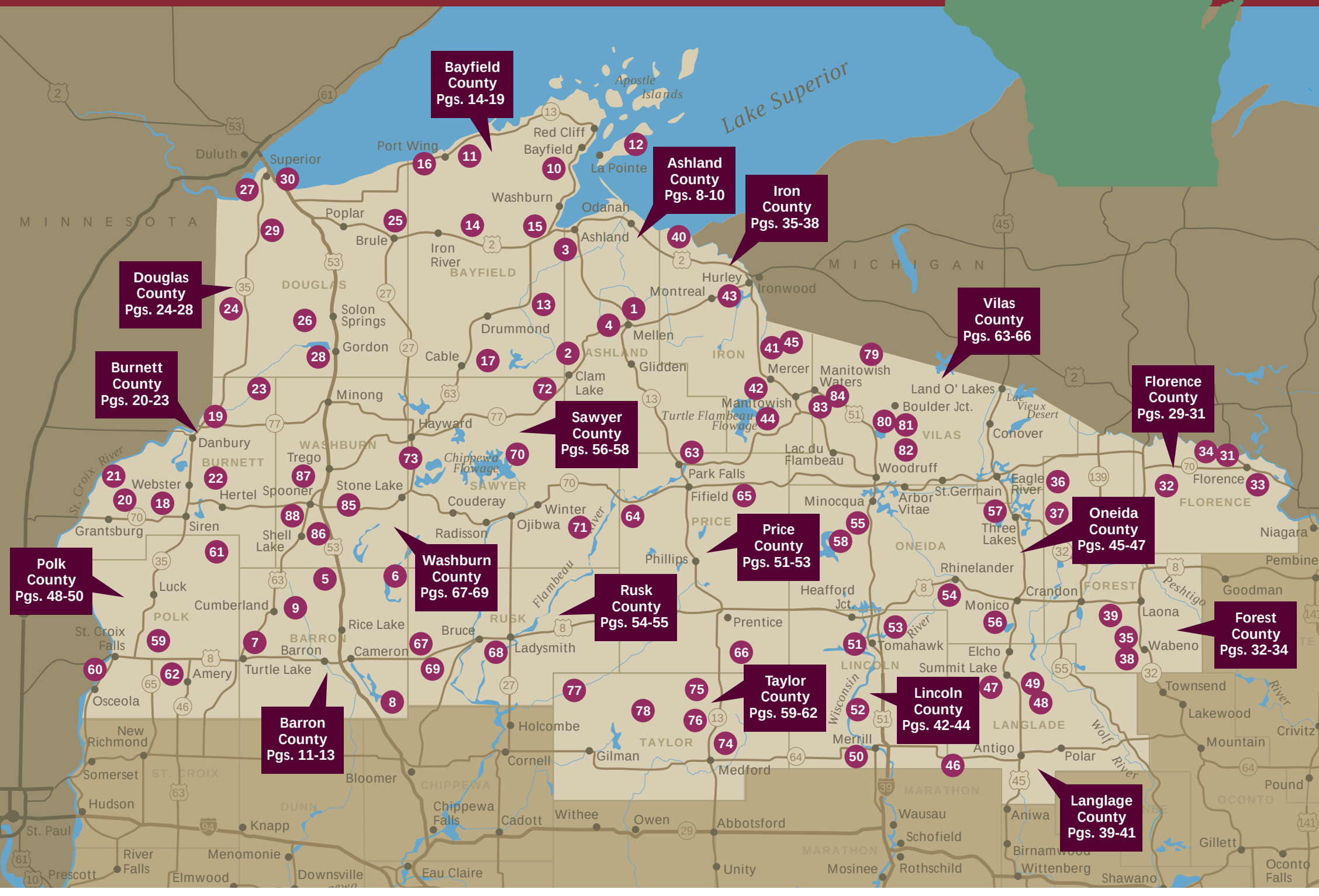
Code of Ethics

The Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail is your gateway to the natural world of Wisconsin. The Code of Ethics serves to guide you as you seek your favorite waypoint sites across the state.

- Treat birds and other animals with respect, never disturbing or collecting anything in their habitat.
- Trails, roads and paths found at the sites provide good access to the property. Avoid leaving them unless you are in a wilderness area.
- Wisconsin has strict trespass laws. Private property does not have to be posted or fenced in Wisconsin. Ask permission if you want to enter private land. Know where you are – pay attention to posted property boundary signs.
- Dogs must be leashed on all state lands during the bird-nesting season from April 15 through July 31.
- Lead by example. Leave the property litter-free and in good condition for the next traveler.
- Give nature a voice. Thank the property owner, manager or staff person for the opportunity to enjoy nature at their site.

Great Wisconsin Birding & Nature Trail

Lake Superior Northwoods Region



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Ashland County

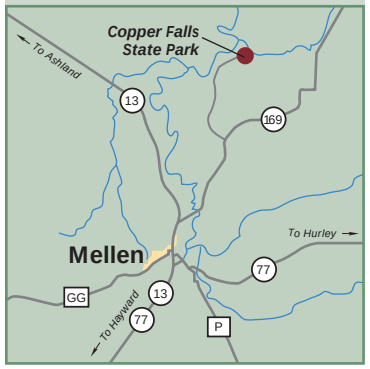
With just over 16 people per square mile, Ashland County is one of the least-populated counties in northern Wisconsin. More than half of its 1,043 square miles is either in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, or the Bad River Indian Reservation.

The county seat, Ashland (population 8,695) is the home of **Timeless Timber** (888/653-5647, www.timelesstimber.com), a uniquely Wisconsin company that salvages, saws and sells 100-year-old logs from the bottom of Lake Superior. Nearby, the **South Shore Brewery** (715/682-9199, www.southshorebrewery.com) offers fun tours; call for times. Just west of town, the **Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center** (715/685-9983, www.northerngreat-lakescenter.org) was made for travelers offering trip planning, an observation tower, video presentations, and cultural and historic exhibits.

Twelve miles west of Mellen you can visit **Morgan Falls**. The falls drop 80-100 feet in an elegant cascade, diagonally traversing a dramatic 70 foot granite face.

1 Copper Falls State Park

Phone: 715/274-5123 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.wiparks.net
Admission fee: State Park vehicle admission sticker required.
Hours: Park open 6am-11pm daily, all year. Office opens at 8am in the spring, summer and fall.
Accessibility: Partial, with one rustic cabin for use by disabled persons, some trail sections are accessible, beach is partially accessible, shower building is accessible.
Parking: Paved parking lots.
Nearest food & lodging: In Mellen, two miles south.



This 2,700-acre state park is famous for its 40-foot waterfall on the Bad River. The park is mostly forested with northern hardwoods, aspen and spruce/fir. Its river valleys, canyons, waterfalls, small lakes and bogs attract seasonal waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors.

Directions: Two miles north of Mellen via Hwy. 169.

Amenities: 55 campsites, 13 with electric hookup; restrooms, drinking fountain, showers, gravel trails, boardwalks, concessions, swimming beach, hiking, mountain biking & X-C ski trails.

Notes: Early May is a great time to see numerous wildflowers in bloom. It is possible to hear howling wolf packs in the wee morning hours. An elk herd has been established 20 miles SE of the park. The park includes several CCC/WPA log structures, bridges and shelters. Its trails were laid out and built by the veterans of WWI.

2 Day Lake

Phone: 715/264-2511 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/
Rarities: Bald Eagle, Osprey.
Admission Fee: Yes.
Hours: 24/7.
Accessibility: Yes.
Signature Species: Waterfowl, warblers.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.
Nearest food & lodging: In Clam Lake, .5-miles southwest.

This 100-acre US Forest Service campground area flanks 625-acre Day Lake. A variety of habitats, including floating sphagnum-tamarack bogs, attract seasonal waterfowl, raptors, and Northwoods' mammals. Barrier-free viewing platforms, two nesting structures and shoreline hiking trails provide great opportunities to watch osprey and bald eagle.

Directions: From Clam Lake take Cty. M west .33 miles, past Cty. GG. Follow signs to the boat landing and day use area. Park in the paved lot near the picnic area.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails, viewing platform, hiking trails, picnicking, camping (66 sites), boat landing, fishing, swimming beach.

Notes: Bring your fishing gear; Day Lake is loaded with small-to-medium Musky.

3 Fish Creek Slough

Phone: 715/682-7071 (City of Ashland)
Web site: www.visitashland.com
Signature Species: Ducks, twenty species of warblers, shorebirds, wading birds, Tundra Swan, Horned Grebe, Hudsonian Godwit, Red-necked Phalarope, Black Tern, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.
Rarities: Snowy Egret, Tricolored Heron, Little Gull, Bonaparte's Gull.
Hours: 24/7.
Accessibility: Fully accessible.
Parking: Paved Parking lot.

A 700-acre slough close to Lake Superior. Habitat includes marsh, lagoon, edge areas, second growth hardwood forest, and boreal forest that attract seasonal waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors.

Directions: Access the slough from Prentice Park located on the city's west side via Hwy. 2.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Bonaparte's Gull.

Amenities: Camping (nine RV sites with electric hookup, seven tent sites), restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails, viewing platform, Bayview Beach, fishing pier, and stockade.

Notes: The fenced deer yard is worthwhile any time of year for bird watching.

4 Mineral Lake

Phone: 715/264-2511 (US Forest Service)

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/

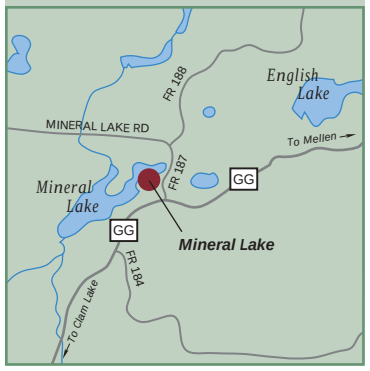
Rarities: Bald Eagle, Loon, Wood Turtle, Timber Wolf, Elk, Canada Yew.

Admission fee: A parking permit is required at the boat landing: $3/daily or $10/annually.

Hours: 24/7.

Parking: There is parking at the boat landing for about 12 cars.

Nearest food & lodging: Mellen 8 miles east, or Clam Lake 13 miles south.



This 1,000-acre US Forest Service campground area flanks 225-acre Mineral Lake. Use a canoe to access several small bays, where you can get up close to prime wildlife habitat. The water from Mineral Lake (the Brunsweiler River) spills over a falls, and then tumbles through a very steep gorge with exposed cliff faces. Forest surrounding and clinging to the rock faces is hemlock and northern white cedar. The rest of the uplands around this lake are mature hemlock/hardwood forest. Birds found here include many interior forest birds such as the Black-throated Blue Warbler, Winter Wren, Veery, Pileated Woodpecker, Oven Bird, Hermit Thrush, Creat-Crested Flycatcher, N. Parula Warbler and woodland raptors.

Directions: From Mellen, 8 miles west on Cty. GG to Forest Road 187 (Mineral Lake Rd.). Turn right (north) on 187, then .2 miles to the boat landing. Launch canoe or boat to access wild and natural areas.

Amenities: Camping (12 sites), restrooms, drinking fountain, boat landing, fishing.

Notes: A great place to see almost all species of northern Wisconsin ferns, including rare ones. The gorge at the outlet is dramatic. Fish for musky in Mineral Lake and trout in the Brunsweiler River. A great place for spring wildflowers (May-early June): trout lily, dutchman's breeches, trillium, and spring beauty. The Penokee Overlook between Mellen and Mineral Lake on Cty GG offers a spectacular view of this portion of the Gogebic range.

MOLLY ROSE TEUKE

Whitetail deer.

Barron County

The Dakota and Chippewa Indians valued the land that is now Barron County for its clear shallow lakes ringed with wild rice beds. European settlers valued it for its timber resources.

Rice Lake (population 7,998) straddles the beautiful Red Cedar River. It is the southern trailhead of the **Wild Rivers State Trail** (715/635-4490, www.wiparks.net), a limestone-surfaced railbed trail running north 40 miles to Solon Springs. Rice Lake is also the home of the **J.C. Bearpaw Co.** (715/236-7300, www.thebearpawcompany.com), a retail sporting goods store with a truly fascinating collection of bird, fish and mammal mounts from around the world. The **Red Barn Theater** (888/688-3770) presents a summer season of professional theater.

Just south of town, the **Pioneer Village Museum** (715/458-2841) is a recreation of a logging era town displaying more than 400 items of historic interest.

In Chetek, visit **Time & Again Antique Mall** (715-924-4000, www.wisconsinantiques.com/timeandagain) or surround yourself with luxury at **Canoe Bay Resort** (715-924-4594, www.canoebay.com).

5 Bear Lake Sedge Meadow State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/ sna

Signature Species: Swamp and Song Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, Sora Rail, and Sedge Wren.

Rarities: American Bittern, LeConte's Sparrow, Yellow Rail.

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: In Haugen, 1 mile east.

This 250-acre sedge meadow wraps a large bay on the southern shore of Bear Lake. The meadow is open with scattered islands of bog birch, alder, black spruce and tamarack close to the lake. Much of the meadow is dominated by marsh cinquefoil, cottongrass, and blue joint grass. Dragon's mouth orchid, leather-leaf, bog-laurel, bog-rosemary and Labrador-tea are scattered throughout.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Sora Rail.

Directions: From the intersection of Cty. SS and V in Haugen, go west on V 0.3 miles, then north and west on Cty. VV 1.6 miles to a parking area south of the road.

6 Hemlock Creek Segment, Ice Age Trail

Phone: 715/537-6295 (Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation)
Web site: www.iceagetrail.org
Signature Species: Great Blue Heron, and Osprey.
Hours: 24/7; but closed during deer hunting season.
Nearest food & lodging: At Birchwood, 4 miles north.

This segment of the Ice Age Trail crosses Pigeon Creek and passes through a small stand of even-age aspen and birch before reaching a prairie, which gives way to a stand of old-growth mixed hardwoods. The climax viewing area is at a large beaver pond with an Osprey nest and Great Blue Heron rookery consisting of more than 75 nests. The site offers some boardwalks.

Directions: From Birchwood travel west on Hwy. 48 one mile, turn left on Loch Lomand Blvd. 2.5 miles to Finohorn Road (note large Ice Age Trail sign) and continue for 100 yards. Park on the shoulder of the road.

Notes: This site includes several significant glacial geological formations as well as a large beaver colony with lodge and dam.

7 Loon Lake State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/537-5046 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

This 2,752-acre site is a good place for the novice birder. A variety of habitat including forest, wetlands and Loon Lake make this area attractive to Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, Sandhill Cranes and Bald Eagles.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Grasshopper Sparrow.

Amenities: Hiking trails.

Directions: Located 5.5 miles north of Turtle Lake via Hwy. 63, turn left (west) on 2-3/4 & 3-3/4 Streets. Follow this road to small parking areas throughout the property.

8 New Auburn State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/537-5046 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

This 1,176-acre site offers marsh and forest uplands that are great for ducks, deer, Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock and Sandhill Cranes.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Killdeer.

Directions: Located two miles north of New Auburn on Hwy. SS - parking is available on north and southeast parts of property.

9 Yellow River State Fishery Area

Phone: 715/537-5046 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
Signature Species: American Bittern, Virginia Rail and numerous sparrow species.
Rarities: The Snowy Owl visits occasionally in winter.

This 708-acre site is a great place to hike and enjoy berry picking, bird watching, and trout fishing. Forested upland, swamp and creek bottoms make this great habitat for deer, rabbits, and Ruffed Grouse.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Virginia Rail.

Directions: Located 5 miles east of Cumberland via Hwy. 48. Parking is available on Hwy. 48, on 20th Avenue on the south end of the property, and on the access road at the end of 13th Street.

Bayfield County

Bayfield County is the kind of place travelers dream about, from the picturesque Apostle Islands to the solitude of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.

The City of Bayfield is the gateway to the **Apostle Islands National Lakeshore** (715/779-3397, www.nps.gov/apis). The largest of the islands, Madeline Island, is the home of **Big Bay State Park** (715/747-6425, www.wiparks.net) and the **Madeline Island Historical Museum** (866/944-7483, www.wisconsinhistory.org/sites/madisle). The **Madeline Island Ferry** (715/747-2051, www.madferry.com) services the big island. The **Apostle Islands Cruise Service** (800/323-7619, www.apostleisland.com) offers excursions to many of the islands and their lighthouses.

You can also visit the **Bayfield Maritime Museum** (715/779-9919, www.bayfield.org), **Hauser's Bayfield Winery** (717/779-5404, www.bayfieldwine.com), or enjoy a summer performance at **Big Top Chautauqua** (888/244-8368, www.bigtop.org).

In southern Bayfield County, the Cable area welcomes visitors with the **Cable Natural History Museum** (715/798-3890, www.cablemuseum.org). If you like biking, the **CAMBA Bike Trails** (800/533-7454, www.cambatrails.org) map 300 miles of mountain and road bike trails in the area.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

10

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

Phone: 715/779-3397 (National Park Service)

Web site: www.nps.gov/apis

Signature Species: Piping Plover.

Rarities: Sub-arctic plants like butterwort and bird's-eye primrose.

Hours: The headquarters visitor center is open May-Oct, 8am-5pm daily; Nov-Apr, 8am-4:30pm Mon-Fri. The Little Sand Bay visitor center is open daily June-Sep.

Seasonality: Spring, summer & fall. The islands are only accessible by boat. Excursions operate from Bayfield May-Oct. Public docks are found on 13 of the islands. Boat & Kayak launch facilities in Bayfield and Little Sand Bay.

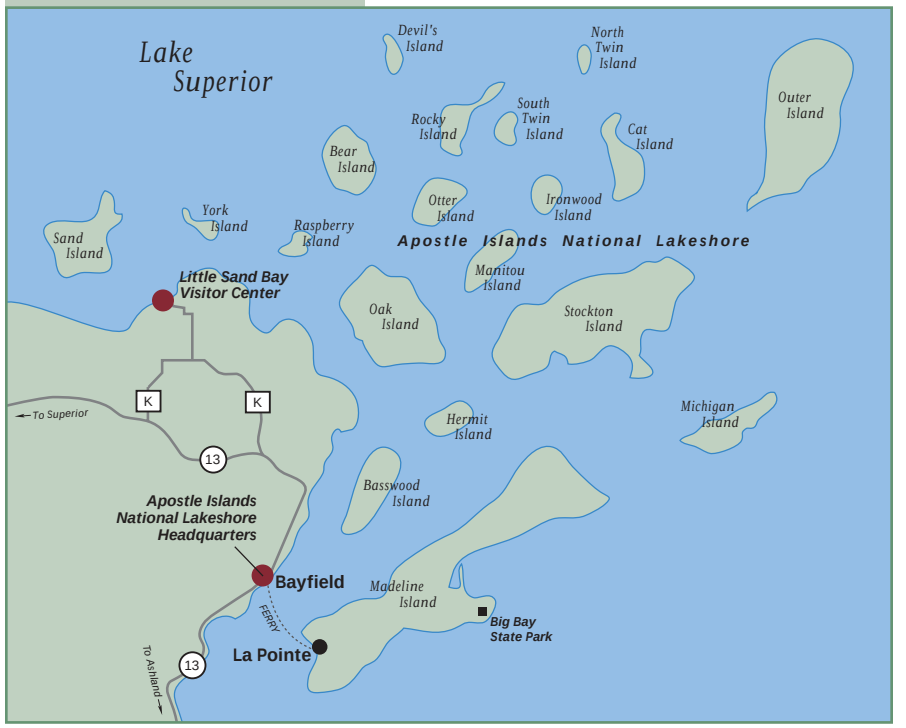
Accessibility: Mainland visitor centers are fully accessible.

Nearest food & lodging: In Bayfield.

Scattered over 750 square miles of Lake Superior coastal waters, the National Lakeshore includes 21 of the 22 Apostle Islands, (69,372 acres), plus a 12-mile stretch of mainland shoreline on Lake Superior's south shore. Habitat is northern hemlock/hardwood forest, boreal forest, beaches, dunes, bogs, lagoons, and sandstone cliffs of Lake Superior. The islands provide nesting habitat for more than 150 bird species and serve as a rest stop for more than 250 bird species during spring and fall migrations.

Directions: The Headquarters visitor center is located one block north of State Highway 13 in Bayfield at 415 Washington Ave. The Little Sand Bay visitor center is located in the park's mainland unit 13 miles north of Bayfield, off Cty. K.

Amenities: Primitive camping on the islands.



Notes: The islands have six historic light stations, (guided tours available June-Sep). The headquarters visitor center is located in the old Bayfield County Courthouse, a National Register building. Stockton Island supports one of the densest populations of black bears in the country. The islands' sea caves are spectacular in any season.

Restrictions: Colonial nesting areas on Eagle, Gull, and Otter islands are closed seasonally. Bald Eagle nesting areas are also closed seasonally.

11 Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna/
Signature Species: Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Yellow Rail, and American Bittern.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Herbster, 3 miles west.

A 552-acre shore fen and open bog with sand spit, lagoon, springs and wetlands along a bay between two rocky headlands of the Lake Superior coast.

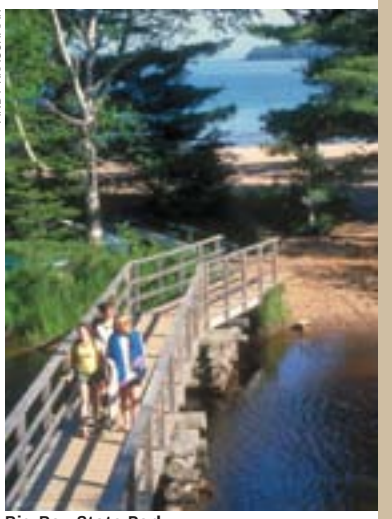
Directions: From Herbster go east 3.5 miles on Hwy. 13, then north on Bark Bay Road 0.5 miles to a boat landing and parking lot on the east side of the road. The best access to the sand spit and bog is by canoe.

Notes: The small village of Cornucopia should be a stop as you travel the area. Check the shoreline for interesting birds. Stop where the Siskiwit River empties into Lake Superior to look for Red-Throated Loons. A small park on Hwy 13 offers free spring water from a well tap to the public - bring your own jug.

12 Big Bay State Park

Phone: 715-779-3346 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.wiparks.net
Signature Species: Common Loon, Merlin, Broad-Winged Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker.
Rarities: Peregrine Falcon.
Admission fee: State Park vehicle entry fee.
Hours: 6am-11pm.
Seasonality: Spring, summer & fall.
Accessibility: Fully accessible campsites and picnic areas, boardwalks.
Nearest food & lodging: In La Pointe, 4 miles west.

Located on Madeline Island, the largest of 22 Apostle Islands, this 2,418-acre park sports rugged wooded cliffs with dramatic views of Lake Superior. It contains a State Natural Area that is open for use by the public. Habitats include bogs, barrier beach, boreal forest and old growth hemlock.


ANDY KRAUSHAAR
Big Bay State Park.

Directions: Take car ferry from Bayfield to La Pointe on Madeline Island. Follow signs 4 miles to the park. Paved parking lot.

Amenities: Flush toilets, drinking fountain, boardwalks, viewing platform, visitors center, gift shop, 60 campsites.

Activities: Camping, swimming, biking, naturalist program, canoeing, fishing, X-C skiing.

13 Marengo Overlook

Phone: 715/634-4821 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: At Clam Lake, 10 miles southeast. The US Forest Service operates small campgrounds nearby at Beaver Lake (10 sites, 3 miles away) and Lake Three (8 sites, 6 miles away).

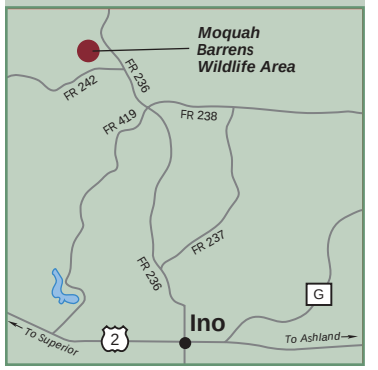
This 4-mile section of the North Country Trail winds through the Marengo Semi-Primitive, Non-motorized Area (2,400 acres). The trail has difficult sections with some steep slopes. This northern mesic hardwood forest is home to thrushes, vireos, warblers, woodpeckers, flycatchers, and woodland raptors.

Directions: From Grand View travel south on Cty. D 3 miles to Forest Road 377, turn east (left) on 377 and travel 4 miles to Forest Road 202, turn south (right) on 202, the trailhead is 1.5 miles on the left with a graveled parking lot for 3-4 cars.

Notes: A rock outcrop along the trail, provides a spectacular view of the Marengo River Gorge (1,000 feet deep). There is excellent trout fishing in the Marengo River.

14 Moquah Barrens Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/373-2667 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Signature Species: Sharp-tailed Grouse (the spring dancing season is tops).
Rarities: The site is well known for its open grassland bird species.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Iron River, 5 miles southwest. The Forest Service operates 3 area campgrounds: Wanoka Lake (5 miles), Birch Grove (7 miles) and walk-in only Bladder Lake (1 mile).



The area is a former barrens that is now forested. The vegetation is a mix of open, upland jack pine barrens, red pine savanna, and mixed pine/oak forest. There are several sandy-bottomed lakes at the southwest edge of the area. The area, well known for its blueberries, is managed with prescribed fire, and has a superb late summer wildflower bloom.

Directions: This 5,000-acre refuge is located 16 miles west of Ashland in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. From Ashland, travel 13 miles west on Hwy. 2 to the junction of Forest Road 236 in the small town of Ino. Turn right (north) on FR 236 and travel about 5 miles north to the junction of FR 242. This is the southeast corner of the wildlife area. Another mile north on FR 236 brings you to the south edge of the Moquah Natural Area, the nation's first Research Natural Area (marked with a sign). Numerous roads through the barrens, can be traveled by car.

Notes: The site has a wolf pack and black bears.

15 Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center

Phone: 715/685-9983 (US Forest Service)

Web site: www.northerngreatlakescenter.org

Signature Species: Migratory raptors, Bald Eagle, and spring warblers. Center staff can recommend other area birding spots.

Hours: 9am-5pm daily.

Accessibility: Center is fully accessible, as is the 2/3-mile boardwalk trail system.

Nearest food & lodging: In Ashland, 3 miles east.

A 37,000 sq. ft, $7 million facility with an observation tower, viewing platform, 100-seat theater, interpretive and historic exhibits, and regional visitor information & trip planning for Wisconsin, Minnesota & Michigan's UP. The Center's 180-acre site is comprised of lowland cedar and black ash, open fields, upland aspen, pine, spruce and balsam. An accessible 2/3-mile boardwalk trail system with two loops winds through the cedar and tamarack wetlands. The Center property is adjacent to the Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE

Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center.

Directions: Located 3 miles west of Ashland on Hwy. 2.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gift shop, boardwalks.

DALE THOMAS

Boardwalk trail system at Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center.

16 Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna/

Signature Species: Loons and Bald Eagles.

Rarities: Black meadowhawk dragonfly and bog copper butterfly.

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: In Port Wing one mile east or west.

This natural area features two units of northern dry-mesic forest on sand spits inland from the Lake Superior shoreline. The forest has large white and red pines that form a super-canopy over white spruce, balsam fir, red maple, white birch, mountain maple, yellow birch and white cedar. The ground layer contains blueberries, large-leaved aster, and several club-mosses. Between the forested sand spit and beach to the north is a sedge meadow, shrub swamp, and bog. The wetland area is an extension of the estuary of the Flag River, which separates the two units.

Directions: For the eastern unit, from Port Wing travel east 1.6 miles on Hwy. 13, turn west 0.2 miles on Lakeview Road, then north on Big Pete Road about 0.5 mile to Lake Superior. For the western unit, from Port Wing travel north 0.6 miles on Washington Ave, turn west 1 mile on Quarry Road, then north on Point Road 0.25 miles to the parking area.

17 Rock Lake Trail & Non-motorized Area

Phone: 715/634-4821 (US Forest Service)

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

Rarities: Large, round-leaved orchid.

Signature Species: Loons on isolated lakes.

Admission fee: Parking fee for the lot on Cty M is $3/day or $10/year. Golden Age Passport applies.

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: In Cable, 7 miles west.

Rock Lake Trail is a hilly hiking and mountain biking trail that winds through 2,000 acres of mature northern mesic and dry mesic forest with some large white pine. Portions of the trail skirt several small remote lakes. Birds found in these habitats include: Scarlet Tanager, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Raven, Eastern Wood Peewee, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Pine Warbler.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Scarlet Tanager.

Directions: Located 7 miles east of Cable on Cty. M. Parking for 25 cars in a graveled lot.

Amenities: Restrooms.

Burnett County

Burnett County is a wonderful study in recreational diversity. Glacial lakes pock the eastern half of the county near Webb Lake; prime vacation area with fishing and water sports for everyone.

Highway 35 bisects the county from Siren in the South to Danbury in the north. The **Gandy Dancer State Trail** (800/788-3164, www.burnettcounty.com), a 98-mile railbed trail from St. Croix Falls to Superior, parallels the highway. A highlight is the 520-foot bridge over the scenic St. Croix River just north of Danbury. On the Yellow River five miles south of Danbury, you can visit **Forts Folle Avoine** (715/866-8890, www.theforts.org), an historic reconstruction of an 1800's fur trading outpost and Indian village. The complex includes an indoor museum and interpretive center.

Prairie landscapes and picturesque wetlands distinguish the western half of the county. North of Grantsburg, the 30,000-acre **Crex Meadows Wildlife Area** (715/463-2739, www.crexmeadows.org) is the state's largest remnant of the Northern Wisconsin Pine Barrens. The western edge of the county is defined by the scenic St. Croix River. The 20,000-acre **Governor Knowles State Forest** (715/463-2898, www.wiparks.net) flanks the river in a narrow band only a mile wide, but about 50 miles long.

18 Amsterdam Sloughs State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/349-2151 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Signature Species: Herons and Ospreys.

Nearest food & lodging: In Siren, five miles southeast.

Amsterdam Slough is a beautiful 6,138-acre property with marsh, flowages, swamp, and forested upland. Bird watching is good at Black Brook Flowage where you can see Great Blue Herons, Osprey and Bald Eagles.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Green Heron.

Directions: From Siren, drive north on Hwy. 35 two miles to Cty. D turn left on D three miles – the sloughs are on your left (south).

Notes: This large complex of habitats is a good place to see American Woodcocks in the spring, and furbearers such as bear, mink and coyotes.

19 Big Island Park

Signature Species: Osprey, Bald Eagle, Common Mergansers, Canada Geese and owls.

Hours: Daylight hours.

Nearest food & lodging: In Danbury, six miles southwest.

Seasonality: Best in sping, summer and fall.

This park is one square mile and includes forest, wetlands, streams and rivers.

Directions: Located six miles northeast of Danbury where Hwy 35 meets the St. Croix River. Paved parking lot.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, foot trails.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE

Canada Geese.

Restrictions: Pets must be on a leash.

20 Crex Meadows State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/463-2896 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Signature Species: Sharp-tailed Grouse, Trumpeter Swans, Osprey and Bald Eagles.

Rarities: Tricolored Heron and White Ibis.

Hours: The visitors' center is open daily 10am-4pm (except major holidays). The property is open 24/7/365.

Accessibility: Handicapped-accessible wildflower trail and duck blinds. The visitors' center and grounds are also accessible.

Nearest food & lodging: In Grantsburg, a mile south of the visitors' center.

A 30,000-acre wildlife area featuring restored wetlands and upland brush prairie habitats with oak/jack pine forests interspersed. The property includes 6,000 acres of open water. 270 species of birds use the property along with every mammal found in Wisconsin and a good variety of reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates. The property supports breeding populations of Osprey, Bald Eagles, Trumpeter Swans, Karner blue butterflies and Blanding's turtles. In the fall migration, as many as 50 Bald Eagles, 7,000 Sandhill Cranes and 12,000 Canada and Snow Geese fly into the area.

Directions: The Crex Meadows Visitors Center is located at the corner of county roads D and F just north of Grantsburg. The property spreads north and east, covering 30,000 acres. A paved parking lot is located at the visitors center, with grass parking areas scattered throughout the property.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails, boardwalks, viewing platform, visitors center and gift shop.

Restrictions: Dogs must be leashed during nesting season. A 2,400-acre refuge is off-limits to entry at all times.

21 Governor Knowles State Forest/ Brant Brook Pines State Natural Area

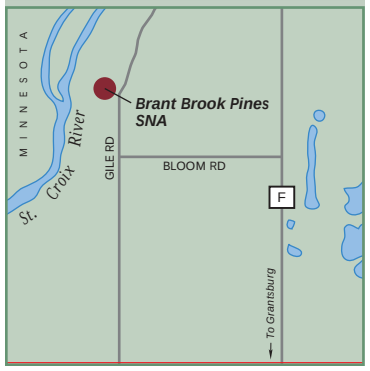
Phone: 715/463-2898 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna/

Rarities: Black and White Warbler, and Yellow-throated Vireo.

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: In Grantsburg, 6 miles southeast.



A 190-acre stand of old growth red pines along the St. Croix River estimated to have originated in the mid-1890s. The area includes many fine trout streams as well as the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

Directions: Brant Brook Pines State Natural Area is located within Gov. Knowles State Forest. From Grantsburg, go north on Cty. F 3.7 miles, then west on Bloom Road 2 miles, then north on Gile Road 0.75 mile to the Brant Brook Pines Ski Trail parking area at the right-angle corner. Follow the trail northwest into the site.

Activities: Camping, swimming, biking, hiking and fishing in Governor Knowles State Forest.

Notes: The St. Croix River, which forms part of the Wisconsin/Minnesota border, is a National Scenic Riverway; an area of lush vegetation and moving water that represents a diversity of habitat stretching 252 river miles through a narrow corridor of wild land.

22 Kiezer State Wildlife Area

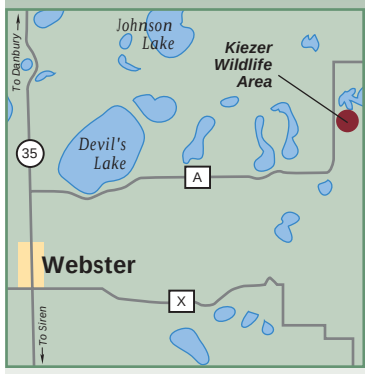
Phone: 715/685-2101

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Signature Species: Bald Eagles and Great Blue Herons.

Seasonality: Best in spring and fall.

Nearest food & lodging: In Webster, 4 miles west.



Kiezer is 1,352 acres of water, marsh and forested uplands with waterfowl, Ruffed Grouse, deer, American Woodcock, snowshoe hares, Bald Eagles and Osprey. You can also fish Banach Lake and Big Lake.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Red-winged Blackbird.

Directions: Located 6 miles east of Webster on Cty. Rd. A, 4 miles east of Hwy. 35. You'll find a parking area as well as logging roads throughout the property.

Nearby attractions: Forts Folle Avoine Historical Park is 7 miles west on Cty. U.

23 Namekagon Barrens State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/635-2101 (Wisconsin DNR)

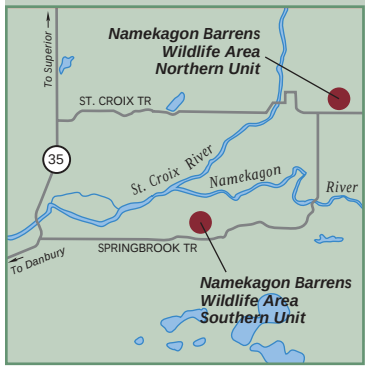
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Signature Species: Sharp-tailed grouse.

Rarities: Upland Sandpipers and Brewer's Blackbird.

Seasonality: Spring, summer and fall, with fewer viewing opportunities in winter.

Nearest food & lodging: In Danbury, 10 miles southwest.



One of the largest pine barrens in the state (5,200 acres) with some prairie and savanna, a few pockets of wetlands and a small lake. Among the scattered pines are long stretches of prairie. The property is known for Sharp-tailed Grouse, Upland Sandpipers, American Kestrels, Eastern Bluebirds and Bald Eagles.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Eastern Bluebird.

Directions: The Namekagon Barrens lie in two lobes. To get to the southern unit, drive north 5 miles from Danbury on Hwy 35, then east 4.5 miles on Spring Brook Tr. To get to the northern lobe unit from the southern unit, head north 2 miles on Namekagon Tr., then 1 mile east on St. Croix Tr. You can park at a small lookout site or off side of the roads. This property is leased from Burnett County.

Amenities: Lookout post.

DAVID HERRICK

Fall color along the Namekagon River.

Douglas County

Douglas County's unspoiled landscape beckons with 431 lakes and the state tallest waterfall, 165-foot Big Manitou Falls in **Pattison Sate Park** (715/399-3111, www.wiparks.net), only a 12-mile drive south of Superior.

Superior is the county's largest city (population 27,134) and the county seat. With its sister city Duluth, it is Lake Superior's busiest port. You can cruise the harbor aboard **Vista Fleet Harbor Cruises** (218/722-6218, www.vistafleet.com). On Barker's Island, you can tour the **S.S. Meteor Museum** (715/394-5712, www.superiorpublicmuseums.org), the last remaining whale-back freighter on the Great Lakes. Built in 1891 for local lumber baron Martin Pattison, **Fairlawn Mansion** (715/394-5712, www.superiorpublicmuseums.org) is a 42-room Victorian jewel that today is the city's museum. On Harborview Parkway, visit the **Richard I. Bong World War II Heritage Center** (888/816-9944, www.bongheritagecentere.org). It honors WWII "Ace of Aces" and Medal of Honor recipient Maj. Richard Bong of near-by Poplar, Wisconsin.

In eastern Douglas County, the **Brule River State Forest** (715/372-5678, www.wiparks.net) is famous for its canoeing, kayaking and trout fishing.

24 Belden Swamp State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna/

Signature Species: LeConte's Sparrow, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and Northern Harrier.

Rarities: A Timber Wolf pack.

Hours: 24/7.

Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.

Belden Swamp is a 1,862-acre wetland complex owned by Douglas County. It is located between two major watersheds. This land mass forms the headwaters of the Spruce River which flows south to the Mississippi, and the Black River. The area features the largest remaining undisturbed open bog in Wisconsin. A large area of muskeg gives this area it's distinctive northern feel and the conifer swamp add to the beauty of this large wetland.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

Directions: From the intersection of Hwy 35 & M in Moose Junction, drive north 5 miles on Hwy. 35 to a parking area west of the road.

25 Brule River State Forest

Phone: 715/372-8539 (Wisconsin DNR)

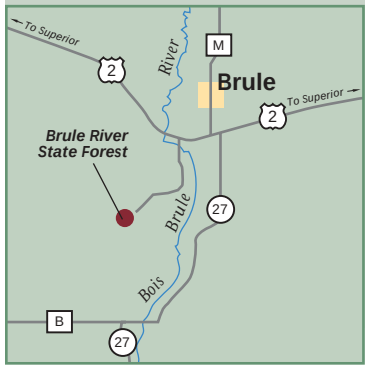
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land

GPS: 46.5372N 91.5928W

Signature Species: The area has consistently produced northern raptors and Saw-whet Owls, northern songbirds such as the Cape May Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Connecticut Warbler, as well as Black-backed Woodpeckers.

Seasonality: Good for migrants in spring and fall, breeding birds in summer, and finches and songbirds in winter, but viewing opportunities may be limited.

Nearest food & lodging: In Brule, two miles north.



At 50,000 acres, this state forest is used by more species of birds and mammals than any other northern Wisconsin acreage of similar size. Its habitat includes high-quality stream, a mixture of boreal and plantation forests, and some pine barrens on the south end of the property. This varied landscape supports deer, Ruffed Grouse, geese, Bald Eagles, Osprey and songbirds. It also offers wonderful camping, canoeing and trout fishing.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Cape May Warbler.

Directions: From Brule, drive west 0.5 mile on Hwy. 2 to South Ranger Road. Turn south 2 miles to state forest headquarters at 6250 S. Ranger Rd. You'll find a parking area at the ranger station and at entry points to the river.

Caution: Roads may be hazardous after spring melt or heavy snows.

Activities: Camping, swimming, fishing, kayaking, canoeing, hiking.

Amenities: Restrooms and drinking fountain are located at the ranger station.

PHILIP OLSON

Canoeing the Bois Brule River.

26 Douglas County State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/395-6912
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
Signature species: Sharp-tailed Grouse.
Hours: 24/7.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.
Accessibility: The Club House and rest rooms are handicap accessible.
Nearest food & lodging: In Solon Springs, 5 miles north.

This 4,000-acre property is managed for Sharp-tailed Grouse. It is a pine barrens habitat with several small, shallow lakes and wetlands.

RJ & LINDA MILLER
Sharp-tailed grouse.

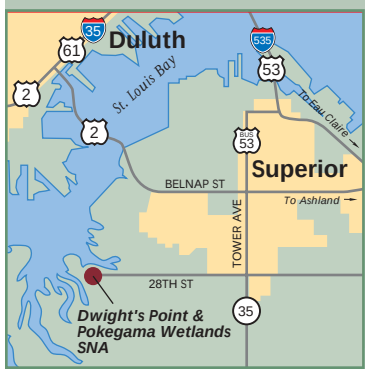
Directions: From Solon Springs, travel south 4 miles on Hwy. 53; then turn west on Cty. M. The site begins immediately west of highway 53, and is both north and south of County M. Parking is available at the Club House.

Amenities: Clubhouse (can be rented) with restrooms, and gravel trails.

Notes: The U.S. Chicken Championship dog trials are held here each year – one of the oldest dog trials in North America. The clubhouse was built for that event. There are horseback riding trails on the property. The North County Scenic Trail will soon pass through the property.

27 Dwight's Point & Pokegama Wetlands State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna
Signature Species: Bald Eagle.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Superior.



This 3,153-acre wetland lies at the confluence of the Pokegama & St. Louis Rivers on the west side of Superior. It includes boreal forest, emergent marsh, and wet clay flats supporting shrub swamp and wet meadow. The St. Louis estuary, with its steep-sided ridges and boreal forest mix, is prime habitat for Bald Eagles.

Directions: This site is located within the Superior Municipal Forest. From the intersection of Hwys. 2 & 35 in Superior, go south on 35 (Tower Avenue) 1 mile, then west on 28th Street about 1.75 miles until it becomes Billings Drive. Access is from any number of points along Billings Drive; you'll find numerous parking areas. Several hiking, biking, and ski trails wind through the site. The natural area is also accessible by water.

28 Gordon Dam Park

Phone: 715/378-2219 (National Park Service)
Web site: www.nps.gov
Signature Species: Trumpeter Swan, Osprey, Bald Eagle, rails, grebes, vireos, and Common Loons.
Rarities: Trumpeter Swans.
Hours: 24/7.
Seasonality: Spring, summer & fall. Hwy. Y may be impassable in winter.
Nearest food & lodging: In Solon Springs, 10 miles northeast.

The park is 80 acres. The Gordon Dam marks the entrance to the pristine St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Its flowage and marshes provide excellent habitat for aquatic and terrestrial Northwoods' wildlife including white-tailed deer, bear, bobcat, snowshoe hare, coyote, red fox, timber wolf, fisher, mink, otter and beaver.

MIKE MCDOWELL
Tundra Swan.

Directions: From Gordon travel west 7 miles on Cty. Y. The park and dam are on the west end of the St. Croix Flowage. There is a gravel and paved parking area.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails, viewing platform, and visitors center.

Activities: Camping, swimming, biking, and hiking.

Restrictions: Pets must be on leash.

29 Pattison State Park

Phone: 715/399-3111 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.wiparks.net
Admission: Vehicle admission sticker required.
Hours: Park is open daily 6am-11pm, year round.
Accessibility: The trail to Big Manitou Falls is partly accessible; the park also has accessible picnic areas, restrooms and campsites.
Nearest food & lodging: In Superior, 12 miles north.

The park encompasses 1,476 acres of forested land – mostly balsam fir, birch, aspen and spruce – wetlands, a lake and rivers. It's features include: Wisconsin's highest waterfall, Big Manitou Falls, at 165 feet, a 300-foot beach on Interfalls Lake, and Little Manitou Falls, a 31-foot twin waterfall. There are 62 campsites and 9 miles of hiking trails.

Directions: Located 12 miles south of Superior on Hw. 35. Paved parking lots in the main park area, at Big Manitou Falls and Little Manitou Falls.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails, boardwalks, scenic overlooks, visitors center, gift shop, equipment loans.

Activities: Camping, swimming, biking, hiking, fishing and canoeing.

Restrictions: Pets on leash.

30 Wisconsin Point

Phone: 715/394-0270 (City of Superior)

Web site: www.uncommondays.com/states/wi/places/wisconsinpoint.htm

GPS: N46 41.853 W091 59.951

Rarities: In the spring and fall, Jaguers and rare Sabine's and Franklin's Gulls visit the area.

Hours: 24/7.

Seasonality: Best during the spring and fall migrations.

Accessibility: A paved road runs the length of the point.

Nearest food & lodging: In Superior, 4 miles southwest.

The largest freshwater sand spit (3.5 miles) in Wisconsin, the point forms sheltered Allouez Bay and the St. Louis River Estuary on Lake Superior. It contains stands of old growth pine, beach dune communities and marsh open water habitats. It is an important rest stop for many migratory birds. Most species of shorebirds are seen during migration, as are many uncommon songbirds and raptors that rest on the point before continuing their journey.

Directions: As you enter Superior on Hwy. 2/53 turn east about 1.5 miles on Moccasin Mike Road, then northwest on Wisconsin Point Road. There are a number of parking areas in the 2.5-miles to the end of the point.

Notes: The point also harbors several uncommon dragonflies, the black meadowhawk, and Boreal snaketail. Franklin's ground squirrels also live on the point, but are not commonly seen. The beach can yield nice specimens of Lake superior agates.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE

Wisconsin Point Lighthouse.

Florence County

Tucked into the far northeastern corner of the state, Florence County is about as wild and natural as Wisconsin gets. With a countywide population of just 5,088 people (just over ten per square mile), Florence County is largely unpopulated.

Nearly half the county's natural charm is preserved in national and county forests. The 7,400-acre **Spread Eagle Barrens State Natural Area** is a birder's paradise. The Pine, Popple and Peshtigo Rivers are gems for whitewater canoeists. These exceptional wilderness components combine each autumn to produce one of Wisconsin's best fall color opportunities.

The **Wild Rivers Interpretive Center** (888/889-0049, www.florencewisconsin.com) tells the story of this unique corner of Wisconsin. Its dioramas, murals and interactive exhibits tell the story of the county's natural history. Stop at the center for driving directions, birding tips and tourism information.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE

Trillium.

31 Fox Maple Woods State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (WisconsinDNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna

Signature Species: Warblers and many types of northern songbirds, hawks and owls.

Hours: 24/7.

Seasonality: Best in spring, summer, fall.

Nearest food & lodging: In Florence, ten miles east.

An outstanding 41-acre northern mesic forest surrounded on three sides by the Whisker Lake Wilderness Area. Canopy trees include old-growth sugar maple, basswood, hemlock, and yellow birch. Herbaceous plants are very rich and cover the forest in abundant spring ephemerals such as spring-beauty, yellow trout-lily and Dutchman's breeches. Exceptional in undisturbed areas.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Black-capped Chickadee.

Directions: From Florence travel 10.5 miles west on Hwy. 70 to a parking area north of the road, (1.1 miles west of where Hwy. 70 crosses Wakefield Creek).

32 Lost Lake

Phone: 715/479-2827 (US Forest Service)

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

Signature Species: Blue-headed Vireo, Pine Warbler, Black and White Warbler, and Blackburnian Warbler.

Rarities: Boreal Chickadee, Bald Eagle, Nashville Warbler, and Osprey.

Admission: Fee to camp; if you don't camp, parking fee is $3/day or $10 annual.

Seasonality: Best in spring and summer.

Accessibility: Partial - one loop of the interpretive trail is wheelchair accessible.

Nearest food & lodging: In Florence, 20 miles east.

Situated on a beautiful, clear lake and surrounded by old-growth forest, this 1,000-acre site is ideal for the bird-watcher. Trails, including the "Assessors Trail" - an historic interpretive trail, lead around the lake and through majestic hemlock and maple/birch hardwood forest. The lake edge is a good place to see and hear Great Blue Heron, loons and ducks. Lost Lake is a Nicolet National Forest Breeding Bird Survey site.

Directions: From Florence travel west 17 miles on Hwy. 70, then south on Forest Road 2450 one mile, then south-east on Chipmunk Rapids Road one mile, then east and south 2 miles on Forest Road 2156 (Halsey Lake Road) to Lost Lake. Access the campground on FR 3774. Access the Organizational Camp complex on the south side of the lake. Gravel parking lot for 6 cars at the "Assessors Trail."

Amenities: 16-site campground at Lost Lake (open May 1-Oct 20), as well as cabins that can be rented mid-May thru mid-October (contact the Eagle River office of the Forest Service). Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails.

CHARLES COOK

LaSalle Falls in Florence County.

33 Spread Eagle Barrens State Natural Area

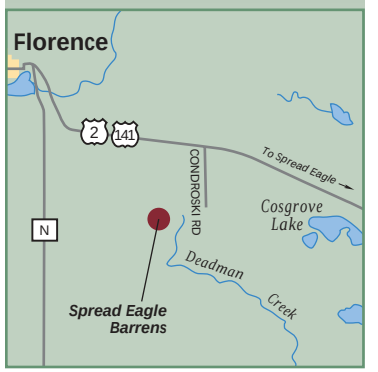
Phone: 888/889-0049 (Wild Rivers Interpretive Center)

Web site: www.florencewisconsin.com/wric www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna

Signature Species: Northern Harrier, Upland Sandpipers, Warbling Vireo.

Seasonality: Best in spring, summer and fall; secondary roads are not plowed in winter.

Nearest food & lodging: In Florence, 8 miles northwest.



A 7,400-acre, state-owned barrens; an area of undulating terrain with many small, clear lakes. Managed by fire, the barrens are interrupted with patches of mixed hardwood and conifer. The Pine River, a state-designated wild river, splits the acreage. There are many dirt roads, ample gravel parking, and good access.

Directions: The heart of the barrens is about 8 miles southeast of Florence. (For a map, stop at the Wild Rivers Interpretive Center in Florence at the corner of Hwys. 2 and 70/101.) You can access the northern portion of the barrens by traveling east of Florence on Hwys. 2/141, turn south on Condroski Road (2 miles east of Florence), or on Ellwood Lake Road (7 miles east of Florence). You can access the southern portion of the barrens by traveling south of Florence 7 miles on Cty. N, then east on Fire Lane Road.

34 Whisker Lake Wilderness Area (Fox Maple Woods State Natural Area)

Phone: 715/479-2827 or 715/528-4464 (US Forest Service)

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

Rarities: White-winged Crossbill and Pine Grosbeaks in winter, Boreal Chickadees year-round.

A 7,500-acre federally designated wilderness heavily forested with several streams and seven beautiful lakes. Some Black Spruce and alder swamp, hardwoods, big White and Red Pine, aspen, and wetland. This area is walk-in camping only; no motorized or mechanized vehicles are allowed. It is a place of true natural solitude.

Directions: Located 11 miles west of Florence on Hwy 70, the tract borders Hwy. 70 and Forest Road 2150. Several graveled parking areas.

Notes: This is a true wilderness area. Be prepared; bring a compass. Access via three different trails that all lead to or pass lakes.

Restrictions: No motorized or mechanized vehicles.

Forest County

Forest County and its near neighbors are aptly named, for they encompass 650,000 acres of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Fully 75% of the county is national forestland, home to some of Wisconsin's finest wilderness. With a total of 10,024, the county population is just under ten people per square mile.

The **Forest County Potawatomi Museum and Cultural Center** (715-478-7474, www.fcpotawatomi.com) in Crandon offers visitors four main sections to tour: the History of the Potawatomi, an interactive language exhibit, a display of different traditional elements, and a display of the heritage of the present day tribe. Just east of Crandon, at Laona, you can travel back in time at the **Lumberjack Special Steam Train & Camp Five Museum Complex** (800/774-3414, www.camp5museum.org). This authentic 19th century logging camp, farm and store also offers fun steam train rides, pontoon & surrey rides, an animal corral and nature center.

THOMAS ACTON JR.

Chipmunk.

35 Ed's Lake National Recreation Trail

Phone: 715/674-4481 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Rarities: Loons on Ed's Lake.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Crandon, 8 miles west; or Wabeno, 8 miles east.

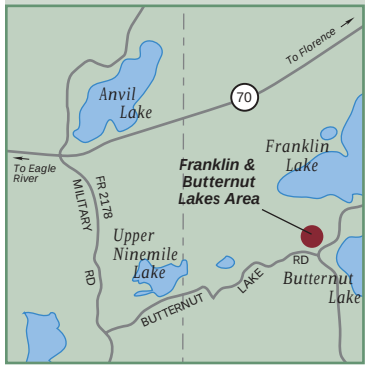
Enjoy six miles of hiking/skiing trail that follows several early 1900's railroad grades through a variety of forest types. The property's 200 acres are hilly, rolling topography through hemlock/hardwood forest that has some scattered super-canopy white pine, and spruce/tamarack/heath bog. Birds common to these communities include: Blackburnian Warbler, Blue-headed Vireo, Ovenbird, Hermit Thrush, Black-throated Green Warbler, Pileated Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, and Scarlet Tanager.

Directions: From Crandon travel southeast about 8 miles on Cty. W. Look for a large sign on the north side of the road. You'll find a graveled parking area for about 12 cars.

Amenities: Adirondack-style shelter at Ed's lake.

36 Franklin & Butternut Lakes Area

Phone: 715/479-2827 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Signature species: Bald Eagles.
Rarities: Red-shouldered Hawk.
Admission: Parking fee sticker required at the trailhead - $3/daily or $10/annually.
Hours: 24/7. Campground open May- Oct.
Accessibility: A short loop at the beginning of the nature trail is accessible by wheelchair.
Nearest food & lodging: In Eagle River, 12 miles west.



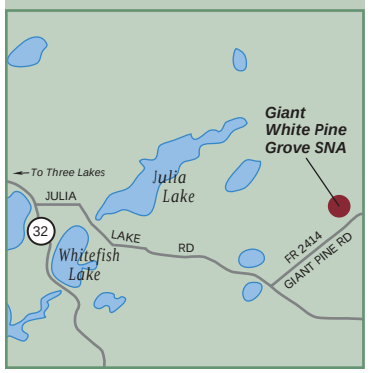
A wonderful 1,000-acre site for the hiker/birder. A 13-mile loop of trail winds around a number of beautiful and remote lakes. A one-mile interpretive nature trail (brochures available on site) takes you through a 400-year-old hemlock and pine forest. A boardwalk crosses an open bog. Birds in these forest communities include: Woodpeckers, Wood Pewee, Winter Wren, Blackburnian Warbler, Cape May Warbler, and Ovenbird. Waterfowl on and near the lake include Loon, Great Blue Heron, Mallard, Spotted Sandpiper, and Willow Flycatcher.

Directions: From Eagle River travel east 7.5 miles on Hwy. 70, turn south 2.5 miles on Forest Road 2178 (Military Road), then east on Butternut Lake Road (FR 2181) to the parking area at the Franklin Nature Trail trailhead. You'll find a parking lot for about 10 cars.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails, boardwalks.

37 Giant White Pine Grove State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna
Signature species: Blackburnian and Black-throated Blue Warblers, Pileated Woodpeckers.
Rarities: Winter Wren, Evening Grosbeak, porcupine, snowshoe hare, black bear and bobcat.
Hours: 24/7.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.
Nearest food & lodging: In Three Lakes, 12 miles west.



One of the best examples of mature, northern mesic forest in northeastern Wisconsin. Located in the Forest Service's Headwaters Wilderness Area, the forest canopy of this 30-acre site contains large hemlock, sugar maple, yellow birch, and basswood. Huge white pines, some more than 3' in diameter, tower above the forest.

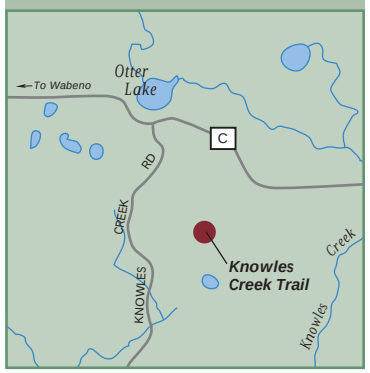
MIKE MCDOWELL

Barred Owl.

Directions: From Three Lakes travel east 4.7 miles on Hwy. 32; then 0.6 mile east on Julia Lake Road; then south and east 3.1 miles on Scott Lake Road (FR 2183); then northeast 1.6 miles on Giant Pine Road (FR2414) to a parking area west of the road. A hiking trail loops around a wetland and through the site.

38 Knowles Creek Impoundment & Interpretive Trail

Phone: 715/473-2602
(US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Hours: 24/7.
Accessible: Yes.

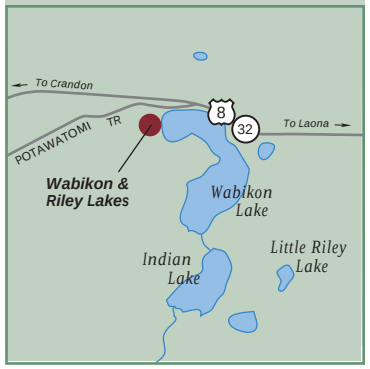


This 170-acre wetland impoundment is a favorite with wildlife viewers. Open water, marsh, old fields and forests combine to attract many species including owls, hawks, eagles, loons, and waterfowl. Enjoy a 0.75-mile hiking trail.

Directions: From Wabeno travel east about 7 miles on Cty. C, turn south on Knowles Creek Road (FR 2349). Watch for Knowles Creek Impoundment signs and follow them to the graveled parking area and trailhead.

39 Wabikon & Riley Lakes

Phone: 715/674-4481
(US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Signature species: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Osprey.
Rarities: Nashville Warbler.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Crandon, 6 miles west.



Search for aquatic birds and shy forest birds by canoe. A large peninsula on the west shore offers access to a nearly pure stand of old growth hemlock. Aquatic birds include Wood Duck, Black tern, Loon, Osprey, and Great Blue Heron. Birds in the hemlock forest include the Nashville Warbler, Golden-crowned Kinglet, N. Parula Warbler, Oven Bird, Canada Warbler, Brown Creeper, Myrtle Warbler, and Red-breasted Grosbeak. There is a well-developed emergent aquatic plant community on this shallow lake, largely of wild rice. A stream on the south end leads to Riley Lake, an undeveloped, shallow lake. From there you can paddle the Indian River on the south end upstream to Indian Springs, another marsh community with spring ponds.

Directions: This 1,000-acre site is best accessed by canoe. From Crandon travel east 5.5 miles on Hwy. 8/32, turn south 0.2 mile on Potowatomi Tr. to the boat landing on the south side of the road. You'll find a small, graveled parking area.

Notes: Fish for brook trout on the Indian River and in the springs.

Iron County

Long and narrow north-to-south, Iron County is blessed with a wealth of natural resources. From 1850-1950, the northern half of the county was a center of iron ore mining; remnants of those deep-tunnel mines can still be seen. Today the area is perhaps best known for its waterfalls. The county's fifteen **waterfalls** include Superior Falls, which drop 90-feet into the Montreal River near its mouth on Lake Superior, and picturesque Potato River Falls, which drops a terraced 90-feet into the Potato River southwest of Gurney. For a map of the county's falls, call 715/561-2922, or visit www.ironcountywi.com.

RJ & LINDA MILLER

Downy Woodpecker.

In the southern half of the county, the attraction is the **Turtle-Flambeau Flowage** (715/769-3680, www.turtleflambeauflowage.com). With 19,000 acres of water and 212 miles of wilderness shoreline, the flowage is perfect for fishing, boating, canoeing and wildlife observation. The Turtle-Flambeau encompasses nine lakes, three rivers and several creeks, all beautifully free of pollution. There are 60 remote campsites accessible by water only. A map with the campsite locations is available by contacting the Mercer Ranger Station at 715/476-2240.

40 Carpenter Creek/Saxon Harbor

Phone: 715/561-2922
(Iron County)
Web site: www.ironcountywi.com
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Hurley, 15 miles west.

This quiet road is seldom used and the traveler has many opportunities to park along the roadside and walk quietly looking at the woodlands, ferns and wild flowers along the way. Many species of northern birds such as thrushes, warblers, hawks and woodpeckers are numerous and easy to spot. Deer and bears may be seen in the early morning or late afternoons as they cross the road. At Saxon Harbor, Loons and Bald Eagles are common and sunsets are spectacular.

Directions: From Saxon in northern Iron County travel west 4.5 miles on Hwy 2, then turn north on Harbor Drive and continue to Saxon Harbor on Lake Superior. Carpenter Creek runs along and is crossed by Harbor Drive.

41 Lake Evelyn State Natural Area

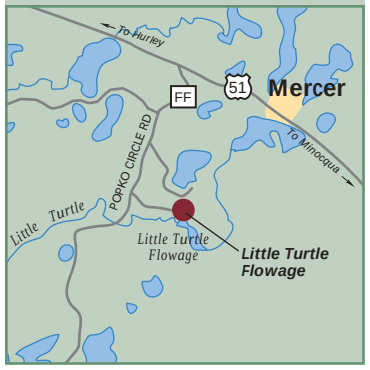
Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna
Signature species: Osprey.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Mercer, 12 miles south.

This 300-acre site contains Lake Evelyn, a soft-water seepage lake surrounded by wetlands and gently rolling forested uplands of white and red pine, and aspen. The 55-acre lake has an undeveloped shoreline and wilderness character perfect for birding. It forms the headwaters of Evelyn Creek, a tributary of the Turtle River. A floating leatherleaf bog rings the lake on the north, while the southwestern portion contains a conifer swamp.

Directions: From Mercer travel north 9 miles on Hwy. 51 to Cty. G, then east 4.5 miles; then north on Bass Lake Road, and immediately west on an access lane 0.1 mile to a boat landing. Park along the road.

42 Little Turtle Flowage

Phone: 715/476-2828 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.turtleflambeauflowage.com
Signature species: Trumpeter Swans, Bald Eagles, Osprey, and Sandhill Cranes.
Seasonality: Best is spring, summer & fall.
Nearest food & lodging: In Mercer, about 3 miles away.



A 640-acre marshland surrounded by grassland (big bluestem prairie - quite a rarity in the Northwoods) and edged by forest.

Directions: From Mercer travel northwest about one mile on Hwy. 51, turn south on Cty. FF about 1 mile, then south again on Popko Circle Rd. about 1 mile to Joe's Shack Road. Take this road to the parking lot (bear right at the fork just before the lot); you'll find gravel parking for about 30 cars.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Sandhill Crane.

43 Penokee Iron Range/Gile Flowage

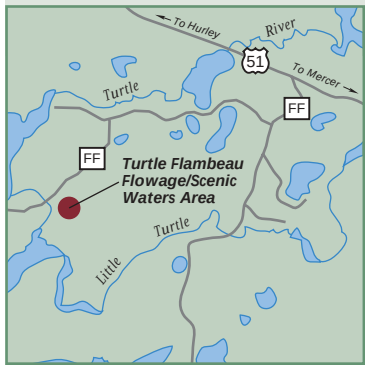
Phone: 715/456-2240 (Mercer DNR)
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest Food & Lodging: In Hurley, 3 miles east.

Iron county was named for the "red gold" iron ore that was mined in the rugged Penokee Iron Range from the 1880s until the 1960s. The most famous mine in the range was the Montreal Iron Mine – the deepest iron ore mine in the world. Montreal is a true "company town" where many of the houses mirror each other in design. Urban birds are found in these small towns. The Gile Flowage is a 3,384-acre flowage. Waterfowl, Loons and Bald Eagles can be found in the flowage where they nest, feed and rest during migration.

Directions: From Hurley travel west about 3 miles on Hwy. 77 through Gile to Montreal where you turn left on Kokogan and then right onto Giles Falls Street. Proceed on street to the overlook of the falls. A bridge crosses the top of the falls and can be accessed by foot. Park in the paved lot.

44 Turtle-Flambeau Flowage Scenic Waters Area

Phone: 715/476-2646 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.turtleflambeauflowage.com
Signature species: Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Double-crested Cormorant, whitetail deer and beaver.
Rarities: Black Tern, Merlin (nests), timber wolves.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Mercer, 5 miles northwest, which prides itself as the "Loon Capital."



This 14,000-acre flowage offers more than 180 miles of white pine and birch shoreline, as well as hundreds of small islands. A truly wild area of forest, wetland and river.

Directions: From Mercer travel 1.3 miles north on Hwy. 51, then one mile south on Cty. FF, then one mile to Popko Circle. Drive 1.4 miles to Joe's Shack Road, branching left for 0.8 miles to the Little Turtle Flowage Wildlife Area.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Black Tern (immature).

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, and gravel trails.

45 Underwood State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/456-2240 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Signature species: Ruffed Grouse, Bald Eagles.

Rarities: Snowshoe hares.

Nearest food & lodging: In Mercer, 16 miles south.

A 1,602-acre site with forested uplands and cedar swamp. The northern border of this property is the State of Michigan.

Directions: From Mercer travel north 9 miles on Hwy. 51; turn east 3.7 miles on Cty. G. then north 3 miles on Bass Lake Road. Park along the roadway.

JEFF MILLER

Red-winged Blackbird.

RJ & LINDA MILLER

Potato River Falls.

Langlade County

Langlade County is a near perfect mix of woods and water. Laced with more than 700 wilderness lakes, 400miles of Class I trout streams, and the fabulous whitewater of the Wolf River, it's a place for kayaks and fly rods.

Antigo is the county seat and the home of Mepps fishing lures; tours of the plant and a display of all 4,000 Mepps models are offered at **Sheldon's, Inc.** (715/623-2382, www.mepps.com).

On the eastern side of the county, the pristine Wolf River traverses the county north-to-south. The river is a powerful magnet that annually draws thousands of whitewater rafters, canoeists and kayakers. Several outfitters in the White Lake area rent all the gear necessary for a day of adventure on the river. Just east of White Lake, **Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure Resort** (715/882-3502, www.bearpawoutdoors.com) offers a unique mix of sport shop, equipment rental, instruction, accommodations and restaurant. You can mix canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, X-C skiing, snowshoeing, trout fishing and outdoor skills workshops in a variety of seasonal getaways.

46 Ackley State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/536-4502 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: In Antigo, 11 miles west.

This 1,158-acre state-owned site is located next to 20,000 acres of county land. The property is managed with fire so it's mainly grasslands with scattered ponds. This property is managed for Sharp-tailed Grouse. It is also a good place to see grassland birds including Clay-colored and Henslow's Sparrows. Yellow-headed Blackbirds use the cattail marshes for nesting and there are numerous species of ducks nesting there.

Directions: From Antigo, travel west 11 miles on Hwy. 64. The property is on both sides of the highway. You'll find parking lots throughout the property.

47 Bogus Swamp State Natural Area

Phone: 608/266-7012 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna
Signature species: Palm Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, Northern Harrier, American Bittern.
Rarities: Rare plants include livid sedge, hair-like sedge, and northern bog sedge.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Summit Lake, 4 miles north.

This 870-acre site owned by Langlade County is a combination of open wetland types. The major feature is the broad muskeg of stunted tamarack and black spruce over a ground cover of sphagnum mosses, sedges, and bog shrubs. Along the northern boundary flows an intermittent, mineral-rich stream lined with emergent aquatic plants and sedge meadow. South of this zone is an unusual "patterned bog", one of only two well-developed examples of this type in Wisconsin.

MIKE MCDOWELL
Palm Warbler.

Directions: From Summit Lake travel southwest 4 miles on Forest Road to the western boundary of the site. Park along the road and walk east to the wetland.

48 Peters Marsh State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/536-4502 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest Food & Lodging: In Antigo, 8 miles southwest.

This 1,700-acre tract contains small ponds, marshland, grasslands and upland hardwood forest. It is an interesting mix of habitats that are attractive to many mammals and birds. This is an excellent place to find American Woodcock in the early spring. Sandhill Cranes nest here and congregate in the fall. Hawks and a variety of owls can be found here, including the Northern Saw-whet Owl.

Directions: From Antigo travel north about 3 miles on Hwy 45 to its junction with Cty. A. Follow Cty. A northeast about 3 miles to a parking area. There are three parking areas on the property.

49 Veterans County Park & Jack Lake

Phone: 715/623-6214
Web site: www.co.langlade.wi.us/
Hours: Open daily; camping from May 1-Dec 1.
Accessibility: One campsite is accessible, as are the fishing pier and beach.
Nearest Food and Lodging: In Antigo, 15 miles south.

A county park on Jack Lake. Waterfowl can be found on the lake in the spring, summer and fall. The pine and hardwood forests are excellent places to find northern birds like Golden-crowned Kinglets, Northern Waterthrushes and Winter Wrens. Coyotes, red foxes, beaver and porcupine are often seen in the area.

Directions: From Antigo travel 13 miles north on Hwy. 45, turn east on Cty. J about 2 miles and follow the signs to the park entrance. Paved parking area.

Amenities: The park offers 41 campsites (31 electrical & 10 non-electrical), picnic tables, a swimming beach, fishing, mountain biking trails, cross country skiing and hiking. There is an arboretum with a well-marked, self-guided trail and a section of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

JAMES CHURCHILL
Bobcat in winter.

Lincoln County

The Wisconsin River flows through Lincoln County, nearly bisecting it into equal halves. Abundant water resources web the northern half of the county with Lake Nokomis, Lake Mohawksin, and the Spirit River Flowage all contributing to the Wisconsin River system. The city of Tomahawk anchors the area – a natural vacation destination for boaters and anglers. On display at the local chamber of commerce office is a world record-setting Black Bear and Muskellunge. Nearby, the **Tomahawk Area Historical Center** (715/453-2056, www.gototomahawk.com) displays local history in a log cabin museum and 1880's schoolhouse.

To the south, Merrill straddles the scenic Wisconsin River. Enjoy a walking tour of the city's historic home district. The Lincoln County Courthouse displays many local historical exhibits, as does the nearby **Merrill Historical Museum** (715/536-5652, www.ci.merrill.wi.us). West of town, **Council Grounds State Park** (715/536-8773, www.wiparks.net), tucked into a sweeping curve of the Wisconsin River, is a favorite of water enthusiasts.

50 Council Grounds State Park

Phone: 715/536-8773 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.wiparks.net

Rarities: An occasional bear can be seen in the park as well as white-tailed deer and red fox.

Admission: A daily or annual state park vehicle admission sticker is required.

Hours: 6am-11pm.

Accessibility: Accessible campsite, shelter buildings and restrooms.

Nearest food & lodging: In Merrill, 2 miles east.

A 508-acre park adjacent to the Wisconsin River. The park offers 55 camp sites, a nature center, restrooms, showers, swimming, a boat launch, fishing, biking and hiking.

JEFF PETERS

Black bear cub.

Directions: Located two miles west of Merrill on Hwy. 107, turn south on Council Grounds Dr. to the park at N1895 Council Grounds Dr. Park entrance is well signed with several parking areas.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails.

Restrictions: From Nov-April, cars and trucks are barred from the majority of the park. Pets must be on a leash.

51 Hiawatha State Trail

Phone: 715/453-5334 (Tomahawk Chamber of Commerce)

Web site: www.gototomahawk.com

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: In Tomahawk.

A state-owned, crushed-stone hiking/biking trail built on a former railroad bed. The trail runs north six miles to the Lincoln/Oneida County line on the south side of Lake Nakomis. The trail is a scenic walk, offering much wildlife.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Directions: The trail begins at SARA Park in Tomahawk; parking is available.

Amenities: Gravel trails, boardwalks, viewing platform, wildlife viewing.

52 New Wood State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/536-4502 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Hours: 24/7.

Amenities: A section of the Ice Age Trail runs through this state-owned property.

This 1,600-acre cedar swamp and forested upland holds deer, Ruffed Grouse, snowshoe hare, and timber wolves. The area is ideal for hiking and bird watching. Hawks, Bald Eagles and a variety of thrushes and warblers can be found here. The New Wood River runs through the northeastern side of the property. This attracts a variety of wildlife from furbearers to many species of birds. Look for Le Conte's Sparrows, Sedge Wrens, Alder Flycatchers, and Sandhill Cranes.

Directions: From Merrill travel north 11 miles on Hwy. 107, turn west 5.5 miles and then south 2 miles on Cty E, turn west on Conservation Avenue 3 miles to the center of the property. You'll find graveled parking areas. Hwy 107 follows the Wisconsin River and there are several dams with impoundments on this stretch of the road that make for interesting stops to look for birds.

53 Treehaven Environmental Learning Center

Phone: 715/453-4106 (UW-Stevens Point)
Web site: www.uwsp.edu/cnr/treehaven
GPS: 45 29.967N; 89 32.989W
Signature species: Northern warblers, nesting Osprey, hawks, and Sandhill Cranes
Rarities: The Northern Shrike in winter.
Nearest food & lodging: Food service is available at Treehaven year-round; lodging is offered from mid-August to mid-May. Off-property food and accommodations in Tomahawk, 7 miles west.

A 1,400-acre forest reserve operated by UW-Stevens Point. It is an excellent example of northern Wisconsin woodland with aspen, birch, pine, hardwood and fir. Two cold-water streams and two beaver ponds, with several old bogs and swamps, are accessible via ten miles of maintained grass trails. Treehaven's public facilities include classroom/meeting space, dining and lodging, snowshoe rental, and viewing windows for bird watchers.

Directions: From Tomahawk, travel east 7 miles on Cty. A to Pickerel Creek Road, then south to Treehaven at W2540 Pickerel Creek Road.

Amenities: Restrooms, food service, drinking fountain, viewing platform, visitors center, gift shop, equipment loans.

Activities: Camping, swimming and biking. The College of Natural Resources undergraduate program is held at Treehaven from mid-May to mid-August. Visitors are welcome. Educational courses and public programs are offered throughout the year.

Restrictions: No pets, trails may be closed due to special programs or events.

LYNN ROGERS

Red Squirrel in winter.

Oneida County

When you look at a map of Oneida County, you'll swear there's more water than land. With 1,100 lakes, it's easy to understand why Oneida County has been one of Wisconsin's top vacation destinations for more than 100 years.

In the northwestern part of the county, the greater Minocqua area is synonymous with family fun. Tour the beautiful Willow Flowage aboard a sightseeing or dinner excursion offered by **Wilderness Cruises** (800/472-1516, www.wildernesscuises.com). Take the kids to **Peck's Wildwood Wildlife Park & Nature Center** (715/356-5588, www.peckswildwood.com) where they can pet a porcupine, feed a deer, and see hundreds of other woodland creatures. **Sheer's Lumberjack Shows** (715/634-6923, www.sheerslumberjackshow.com) features exciting competition in log rolling, chopping, sawing and climbing. In the evening, enjoy a performance at the **Northern Lights Playhouse** (715/356-7173, www.northernlightsplayhouse.com).

In the southeast, Rhinelander preserves its timber history at the **Logging museum Complex** (715/369-5004, www.rhinelanderchamber.com), a full-scale reproduction of a 19th century logging camp with a narrow-gauge railroad. In the northeast, you can enjoy tours and tastings at the **Three Lakes Winery** (800/944-5434, www.fruitwine.com).

54 Almon Bog Trails at Almon Park/Buck Lake

Phone: 715/369-6140 (Oneida County)
GPS: 45.58 N Lat. 89.41 W Long.
Signature species: Common Loon and Pileated Woodpecker.
Rarities: Warbler and kinglet opportunities. Ringed neck snake.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.
Accessibility: Paved but steep path to lakeshore.
Nearest food & lodging: In Rhinelander, 5 miles north.

This 80-acre county park offers woodland trails through old age mixed hardwoods, northern bog with a boardwalk, and lakeshore trail. Paved parking areas with an adjacent picnic area, restrooms and swimming beach.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Chestnut-sided Warbler.

Directions: From Rhinelander, travel south about 3 miles on Cty. G to Lassig Rd., south on Lassig to Hixon Lake Rd., then west on Hixon to the park.

Amenities: Restrooms, picnic area, boardwalks.

55 Bearskin State Trail

Phone: 715 /356-5211 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.wiparks.net
GPS: 45.88 N Lat. 89. 70 W. Long. for the northern trailhead; 45.64 N 89.69 W. for the southern trailhead.
Admission: A daily or annual state trail pass is required.
Hours: Daylight hours.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer and fall; heavy snowmobile traffic makes it unsuitable in winter.
Nearest food & lodging: In Minocqua, Hazelhurst or Rhinelander.

This 18-mile railbed trail offers a packed granite gravel surface for hiking/biking in the warmer weather, and snowmobiling in the winter. Excellent birding as the trail transects varied habitats – northern hardwoods, bogs, old-field, marsh and springs, and trout stream. The south end of the trail is especially productive.

MIKE MCDOWELL
Northern Cardinal.

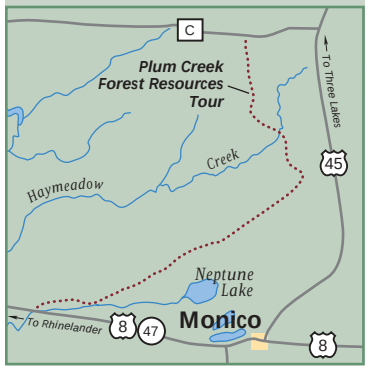
Numerous trestles and boardwalks provide viewing stops. Fascinating interpretive signage.

Directions: The north trailhead is located behind the post office in Minocqua; the south trailhead is about two miles southwest of Harshaw on Cty. K. You'll find paved parking at both trailheads.

Amenities: Restrooms and drinking fountain at the Minocqua trailhead, and at the halfway point at Blue Lake.

56 Plum Creek Forest Resources Trail

Phone: 715/453-7952 (Plum Creek Timber Company)
Signature species: Connecticut Warbler, nuthatches, vireos, Winter Wrens, Clay-colored Sparrow and Ruffed Grouse.
Hours: 24/7– may be impassable in winter.
Nearest Food & Lodging: In Rhinelander, 13 miles east.



Plum Creek is the second largest private timberland owner in the Unites States with 548,000 acres in Wisconsin. This 9-mile auto trail is well marked and has a full color guidebook that is available at the site. This logging road takes you past creeks, marshes, spruce forest, aspen stands, hardwoods, and old growth pine. Boreal species like Boreal Chickadee, Gray Jay, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher can be seen. Many species of warblers can be found here including Golden-winged, Mourning and Canada. Clear-cut areas attract flocks of warblers, thrushes and sparrows. Mammals include wolves, fishers, deer and bear.

Directions: From Monico travel west 4 miles on Hwy. 8/47 to Tower Road, turn northeast and trace Tower Road 9 miles to Cty. C. You can park along the roadway.

57 Thunder Lake State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/356-5211 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
GPS: 45.8136 N 89.1989 W.
Rarities: Northern Hawk Owl, Yellow Rail, Short-eared Owl, LeConte's Sparrow.
Seasonality: Limited access in winter and early spring.
Nearest food & lodging: In Three Lakes, 3 miles southeast.

2,700 acres of sedge meadow, barrens, bog lakes and tamarack forest. This area is large, wild and filled with interesting birds. Known as a hotspot for birds, one can find Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes, and Northern Saw-whet Owls. Over 20 species of Warblers nest in the area and in the winter, flocks of grosbeaks, crossbills, Common Redpolls, and Pine Siskins can be seen.

MIKE MCDOWELL
Northern Hawk Owl.

Directions: From Three Lakes travel north 1 mile on Hwy. 32, turn west on Rice Lake Road – the property begins 0.5 mile from Hwy. 32.

58 Willow Flowage

Phone: 715/356-5211.
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us
Signature species: Bald Eagles, Osprey, Loons, Sharp-tailed Grouse, shorebirds and owls. Great Gray owls are occasionally seen in winter.
Nearest food & lodging: In Hazelhurst, 14 miles northeast.

This area is known for attracting large concentrations of waterfowl during spring and fall migrations. Shorebirds can be seen along mud flats. Great Horned, Eastern Screech Owls, Northern Saw-whet Owls and Barred Owls are found here.

RJ & LINDA MILLER
Bald Eagle.

Directions: From Hazelhurst travel south about 3 miles on Hwy. 51, turn west and south about 6.5 miles on Cty. Y, then west about 2 miles on Willow Dam Road to the parking lot of Wilderness Cruises.

Notes: The flowage offers exceptional fishing.

Polk County

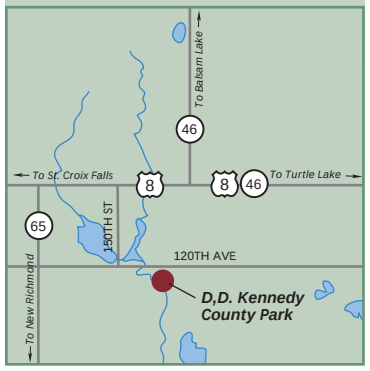
Wisconsin's first state park, **Interstate State Park** (715/483-3747, www.wiparks.net), is located just south of St. Croix Falls in western Polk County. The park is famous for its stunning bluff-top views of the St. Croix River and its unusual glacial formations.

St. Croix Falls is also the headquarters of the **St. Croix National Scenic Riverway** (715/483-3284, www.nps.gov/sacn). The riverway traces the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers for more than 250 miles. Staff at the riverway's new multi-million dollar interpretive center will help you plan an exciting canoe adventure on the river. The **St. Croix Festival Theatre** (888/887-6002, www.festivaltheatre.org) offers a professional, seven-show repertoire.

Just a few miles south in Osceola you can visit **Cascade Falls**, a small but very picturesque waterfall located just a block off Main Street. You can also enjoy a ride along the sandstone bluffs of the St. Croix River aboard a steam or diesel-powered train operated by the **Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway** (800/711-2591, www.trainride.org).

59 D.D. Kennedy County Park

Phone: 715/485-9294 (Polk County)
Web site: www.polkcountytourism.com
Signature species: Black-throated Green and Canada Warblers, Blue-headed Vireos, Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Wilson's Snipe and American Woodcock.



A 106-acre preserve along the Balsam Branch that flows through central Polk County. A prairie restoration area features native grasses and wildflowers. The park includes a dam, millpond, and well-maintained trails. It provides a variety of habitat for a good mix of birds.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Wilson's Snipe.

Directions: From St. Croix Falls travel east 8 miles on Hwy. 8, turn south on Hwy. 65 about 1.5 miles, turn east on 115th Avenue about 1.5 miles to the park. Watch for the small, brown signs.

Amenities: Fishing from a bridge and handicap accessible pier, interpretive hiking trails, a picnic area w/grills, shelter, and restrooms.

60 Interstate State Park

Phone: 715/483-3747 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.wiparks.net
Admission: A daily or annual state park vehicle sticker is required.
Hours: The park is open daily 6am-11pm year-round. The neighboring Ice Age Interpretive Center is open daily 8:30am-4:30pm year-round, (the park is the western terminus of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail).
Accessibility: The park offers accessible campsites, restrooms, shelter and picnic areas, and an accessible fishing pier. The Ice Age Interpretive Center is accessible, as are two of the park's nine miles of hiking trails.
Nearest food & lodging: In St Croix Falls, one mile north; or in Dresser, one mile south.

Wisconsin's oldest state park with 85 campsites, showers, a nature center, a swimming area, a boat launch, and awesome views of the St. Croix River gorge. Three state natural areas are contained within the park's 1,400 acres protecting unique glacial features and plant communities. Habitat types include upland and lowland forest, and bedrock glade. The park contains numerous wetland areas and encircles Lake O' the Dalles. A Bald Eagle nest and Great Blue Heron rookery are within the park boundaries.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Great Blue Heron.

Directions: From St. Croix Falls travel south one-half mile on Hwy. 35 to the park entrance on the west side of the road. There are several paved parking areas within the park.

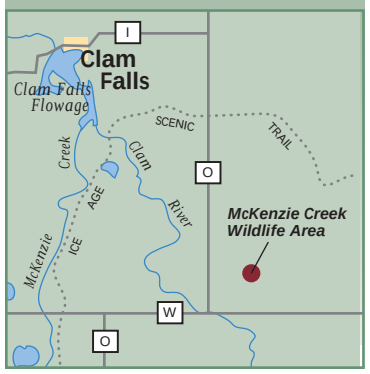
Activities: Camping, swimming, biking, fishing and hiking.

JOHN EIDSMOE

Interstate State Park.

61 McKenzie Creek State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/537-5046 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife



This 5,497-acre wildlife area has 4.6 miles of hiking trails. There are extensive hardwood forests on the property along with bogs and McKenzie Lake. Common species include American Woodcock, waterfowl, Ruffed Grouse, Bald Eagles and Osprey. The area includes six lakes and McKenzie Creek, a fine trout stream.

Directions: Located in the northeast corner of Polk County, 8 miles east of Frederic on Cty. W. Parking lots on north, south, and central part of property and at McKenzie Lake.

Activities: Hiking, berry picking, and trout fishing.

62 York Park

Phone: 715/268-7486 (City of Amery)
Web site: www.polkcountytoursm.com
Signature species: Spring migratory warblers, and loons on the lake.
Hours: Open 6am-10pm daily.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.
Accessibility: One trail is paved, railed fishing pier.
Nearest food & lodging: In Amery.

The park offers 40 acres of urban, mixed hardwood forest on a hilly site, boggy wetland, and one-quarter mile of undeveloped lakeshore. Enjoy three miles of graveled trails and a viewing platform. Birds in the forest include Golden-winged, Northern Parula, Magnolia, Blackburnian and Mourning Warblers, Evening Grosbeaks, Red-eyed and Blue-headed Vireos, and Brown Creepers. On the lake, one can find Common Loons, Bald Eagles, Osprey and a variety of ducks and herons.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Blackburnian Warbler.

Directions: The park is located on the northern edge of Amery, on the west side of Hwy. 46. Paved parking and well-maintained trails.

Price County

With 300,000 acres of unspoiled public land, Price County holds many attractions for visitors.

Park Falls in northern Price County is one of two headquarters for the 1.5-million acre **Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest** (715/762-2461, www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf).

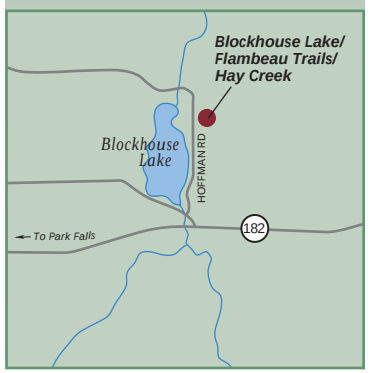
Just to the south, Fifield's logging history is preserved at the **Old Town Hall Museum** (800/269-4505, www.pricecountywi.net). Just south of town, the **Smith Rapids Covered Bridge** on the South Fork of the Flambeau River is a popular recreation of the town lattice design.

At Phillips in the center of the county, a fascinating collection of folk art can be found at the **Wisconsin Concrete Park** (800/269-4505, www.pricecountywi.net); whimsical concrete creations festooned with stones, shells and bits of broken glass.

In the southeastern corner of the county, near Ogema, stands **Timm's Hill**. At 1,951.5 feet above sea level, it is the highest point in the state. The view from the observation tower is particularly stunning in autumn.

63 Blockhouse Lake/ Flambeau Trails/ Hay Creek

Phone: 715/762-3204 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
Signature species: Trumpeter Swans, Black-backed Woodpeckers, Gray Jays, Bald Eagle, Common Raven, Boreal Chickadee and Sharp-tailed Grouse.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Park Falls, 8 miles southwest.



Upland forest, conifers, streams, wetlands and Blockhouse Lake combine to create abundant habitat for many birds and mammals. Good concentrations of waterfowl are attracted to Blockhouse Lake during migrations. Mammals include fishers, timber wolf and bobcats.

Directions: From Park Falls travel 6 miles east on Hwy. 182, turn north on Hoffman Road to a parking lot at the intersection with Blockhouse Lake Road. This area is a matrix of DNR and US Forest Service lands. The Flambeau trail radiates from the Blockhouse Lake parking area. Hay Creek is a 13,424-acre state-owned wildlife area north of Blockhouse Lake just across the Iron County line. The Hay Creek Wildlife Area can be accessed by traveling east of Park Falls 8 miles on Hwy 182, then north on Forest Road 153. You'll find ample parking throughout the area.

64 Kimberly Clark State Wildlife Area

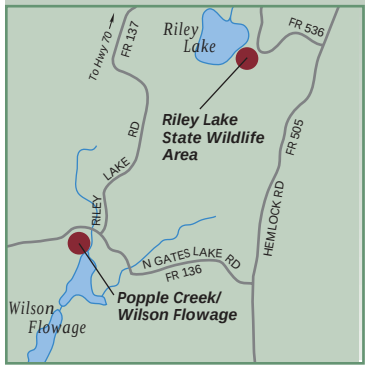
Phone: 715/762-3204 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Fifield or Phillips – both about 12 miles east.

This area is managed with fire for Sharp-tailed Grouse that can be found most mornings eating gravel along the roads. Three small flowages have been constructed with associated bogs and marshes. Deer, bears and fishers are often observed along with Sandhill Cranes and a nice variety of waterfowl. Loons, Osprey and Bald Eagles also use this area.

Directions: From Fifield travel west 9 miles on Hwy 70, turn south on Price Lake Road for 3.5 miles. Price Lake Road forms the northwestern boundary of the property with three access roads tracking east across the property. You'll find ample on-road parking. There are good walk-in roads along Cty. W at four gated entrances.

65 Popple Creek/Wilson Flowage & Riley Lake State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/762-2461 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnt
Signature species: Ring-necked Duck, Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Osprey, Tundra Swan, Snow Goose, and the Common Loon.
Rarities: Osprey nest here.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Fifield, 16 miles west.



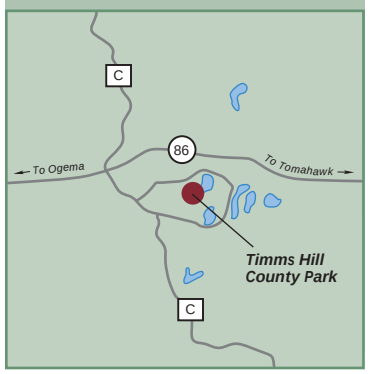
Popple Creek Trail leads wildlife watchers along a 266-acre glacial ridge to an expansive vista of Wilson Flowage where waterfowl and wetland wildlife abound. At Riley Lake you can see Sharp-tailed Grouse in courtship displays in early spring. Schedule the use of blinds to observe the birds by contacting the Forest Service.

Directions: These are two sites separated by about three miles; both lie in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest about 12 miles east of Fifield. Popple Creek/Wilson Flowage: From Fifield drive east 12 miles on Hwy. 70, turn south for 6 miles on Riley Lake Road (FR 137), turn west on Gates Lake Road (FR136) for 0.02 mile to the parking lot. Riley Lake State Wildlife Area: From Fifield drive east 14.5 miles on Hwy. 70, turn south for 3 miles on Hemlock Road (FR 505), then west on FR 536 for 1.5 miles to the lake. You'll find gravel parking areas at both locations.

Amenities: gravel trails, viewing platform.

66 Timm's Hill County Park

Phone: 715/339-6371 (Price County)
Web site: www.pricecountywi.net
Hours: Open daily 7:30am-9:30pm, May-Oct.
Nearest food & lodging: In Phillips, 16 miles east.



This 220-acre county park encompasses Timm's Hill, the highest point in Wisconsin. Hike the Timm's Hill section of the Ice Age Trail to the observation tower. The park's hardwood forest and the surrounding countryside is spectacular in fall. Enjoy good looks at warblers during spring and fall, woodpeckers, thrushes, deer and Ruffed Grouse.

Directions: From Ogema travel 5 miles east on Hwy 86, then south about 0.5 mile on Co. C, then east on Rustic Road 62 for 0.5 mile to the park entrance. You'll find a paved parking lot in the park.

Amenities: Park shelter, restrooms, swimming, hiking trails, biking, and a pair of boat launches.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Late autumn in northern Wisconsin.

Rusk County

Rusk County's wealth of natural resources, ecological diversity and abundant wildlife have made the area a top destination for outdoors enthusiasts and nature buffs.

The picturesque Blue Hills in northwestern Rusk County provide recreational opportunities year-round, including the 27-mile Blue Hills section of the Ice Age Trail.

The county's rivers – the Chippewa, Flambeau, Thornapple and Jump – offer varied canoeing challenges, great for both the pro and the novice. Many of the crystal-clear streams that feed these rivers are ideal trout habitat.

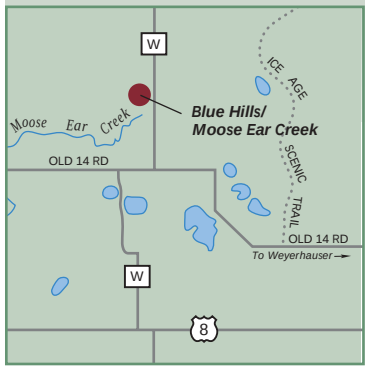
At Ladysmith, the county seat, the Rusk County Visitors Center is housed in the city's old railway depot – complete with a static display of a diesel locomotive and several historic passenger and freight cars. The **Rusk County Historical Society Museum** (800/535-7875) includes eleven buildings with a little red schoolhouse and an old wooden jail.

RJ & LINDA MILLER

Whitetail fawn.

67 Blue Hills/Moose Ear Creek

Phone: 715/532-3911 (Wisconsin DNR)
Signature species: Red-shouldered Hawks, Whip-Poor-Will, Golden-winged Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food and lodging: In Weyerhaeuser, 3 miles east.

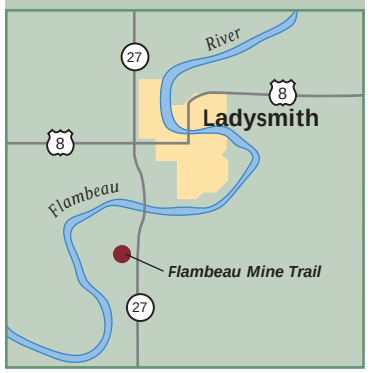


The Blue Hills are ancient mountains that were ground down to hills by the last glacier that retreated from Wisconsin more than 10,000 years ago. The rugged landscape is covered by lush vegetation. Moose Ear Creek is part of a watershed and is traversed by the Ice Age Trail. Very few people visit this area even though it is very rich in bird-life.

Directions: From Weyerhaeuser, take Old 14 Road west for 2.5 miles to the Ice Age Trail entrance on the north side of the road. Park along the road and walk north into the property. Or, continue on Old 14 Road another mile to a boat ramp area on the south side of the road to find a parking lot and walk back to the Ice Age Trail.

68 Flambeau Mine Trails

Phone: 800/535-7875 (Rusk County)
Web site: www.miningmatters.org
Fee: Suggested donations.
Hours: Daylight hours.
Nearest food and lodging: In Ladysmith, 2 miles north.



This 181-acre site was an open-pit, copper and gold mine from 1991-1999. It is a good example of mine reclamation. Four miles of well-maintained trails along mostly flat terrain provide for good views of grassland birds such as Meadowlarks, Song Sparrows, and Common Yellow-throated Warblers. The marshes are home to Canada Geese, Great Blue Herons, and Marsh Wrens. Interpretive signs educate and inform visitors about the reclamation of the mine and the restoration of native habitat.

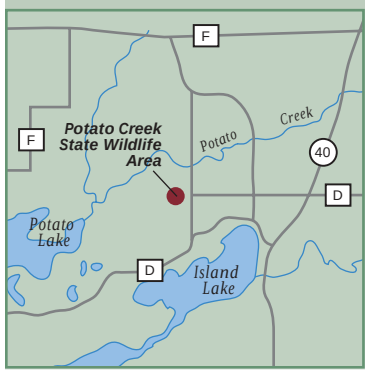
MIKE MCDOWELL

Yellow Warbler.

Directions: Located 1.7 miles south of Ladysmith on Hwy 27. You'll find a large, paved parking lot.

69 Potato Creek State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/532-3911 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
Signature species: Ruffed Grouse, Barred Owl, and Pileated Woodpecker.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Bruce, 8 miles northeast.



This 984-acre property includes marshes and streams, flowages and small pothole ponds surrounded by grasslands and upland forests. Four miles of hiking trails give the bird watcher good access to the property. Ruffed Grouse, Barred Owl and Pileated Woodpeckers are found in the forested part of the property. Grassland birds including meadowlarks and a variety of sparrows are found in the meadows. Eagles and Osprey hunt for fish in the flowages.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Eastern Meadowlark.

Directions: From Bruce travel 8 miles southwest on Hwy. 40, turn west 1.5 miles on Cty. D to Dziemela Road and the property. Three parking lots are located around the property.

Sawyer County

Sawyer County is dominated by the water resources in its northwestern quadrant, including the 15,000-acre Chippewa Flowage and 5,000-acre Lac Courte Oreilles.

Hayward, the county seat, is perhaps best known as the home of the **National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame** (715/634-4440, www.freshwater-fishing.org). With lots of farm animals, Northwood's animals, deer, a cougar, a Siberian Tiger and more, **Wilderness Walk Zoo & Recreation Park** (715/634-2893, www.hayward-lakes.com/wildernesswalk.htm) is another great family idea.

MIKE MCDOWELL

American Elk.

Bring your clubs; Hayward fancies itself the "Golf Capital of Wisconsin" with eighteen courses within an hour's drive of the city. To the east, Winter is the headquarters of the **Flambeau River State Forest** (715/332-5271, www.wiparks.net), 90,000 acres of wilderness with ATV and biking trails, boating, fishing, hiking and 60 campsites.

70 Chippewa Flowage

Phone: 715/634-6513, 634-4821, 865-2329 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us

Signature species: Bald Eagles, Common Loons, Osprey, Warblers, Waterfowl.

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: Several dozen resorts on the flowage offer good food and accommodations.

The "Chip" is a 15,300-acre flowage with 233 miles of rugged pine and aspen shoreline cut by numerous bays, channels, and floating bogs. The waters are dotted with hundreds of forested islands. Travel by boat or canoe to fully appreciate the abundant wildlife throughout the warm months.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Least Bittern.

Directions: From Hayward travel east 12 miles on Cty. B, turn south on Cty. CC which cuts through the middle of the flowage 5 miles to Herman's Landing. Stop for maps and information. There are several public boat launches and picnic areas on the flowage with gravel parking. Many resorts on the "Chip" will rent you a boat or canoe.

71 Flambeau River State Forest

Phone: 715-332-5271

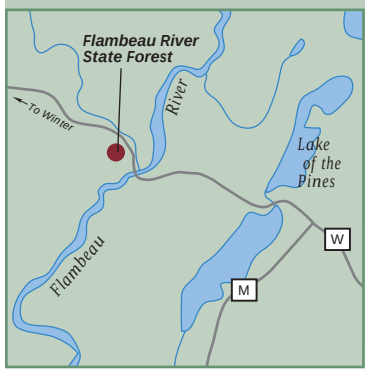
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us

Admission fee: Campground fees where applicable.

Hours: 24/7

Parking: Parking throughout the property

Nearest food & lodging: In Winter, 13 miles to the west or in Phillips, 18 miles to the east.



Important goals guide the management of this 90,000 - acre property located along the Flambeau River. The principles of sustainable forestry are used to assure that the forest can and will continue to provide a full range of benefits to the people and visitors of Wisconsin. Northern hardwood forests of sugar and red maples, yellow birch and white ash create a beautiful color display in fall. North and south forks of the Flambeau River offer 75 miles of white water canoeing and there are numerous lakes to fish in. Northern birds are found in good numbers throughout the property along with Bald Eagles and Common Loons.

Directions: 13 miles east of Winter via Highway W, where the North Fork of the Flambeau River crosses Hwy W

Amenities: Campsites are available for a fee and picturesque remote campsites along river are offered at no cost on a first come, first serve basis.

72 Lynch Creek State Wildlife Area

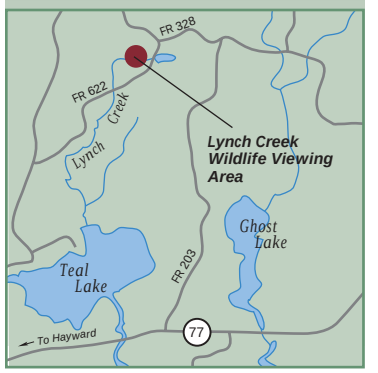
Phone: 715/748-4875 (US Forest Service)

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

Rarities: Elk were introduced near here – you may be lucky enough to see one.

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & lodging: There are many area resorts and restaurants. Hayward, 25 miles west, offers all services



This 100-acre site begins with a short, 1/4-mile trail that leads to a viewing platform overlooking Lynch Creek impoundment. Another trail to the south leads to a grass/forb/shrub peninsula on Lynch Creek. The habitat is mainly cattail marsh, shrubby, bog wetland, and stream with some Red pine forest. Common avian species include the Belted Kingfisher, snipe, flycatchers, swallows, warblers, rail, Great Blue Heron, bitterns, Sandpipers, and many ducks. This is a site for a moonlit walk, since the trail is easy to follow and many of the wetland birds are most active at night.

Directions: From Hayward travel east 20 miles on Hwy. 77, turn north for 5 miles on FR 203, turn west for 1 mile on FR 328, turn south for 1/4-mile on FR 622. You'll find parking for 3-4 cars on the west side of the road; the trail to the viewing platform is on the east side.

73 Totagatic Lake State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/634-2688 Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Hours: 24/7.

Nearest food & Lodging: In Hayward, 7 miles southeast.

This 2,719-acre state owned property includes the Totagatic Flowage, created by a dam on Nelson Lake. The dam is located across the highway from the parking area. At the dam, there is a wildlife viewing overlook adjacent to the highway. Birders can find Red-breasted Nuthatch, warblers, Blue-headed Grosbeak and other uncommon species here. The lake is surrounded by marsh, northern mesic and wet-mesic forest including the Totagatic Highlands Hemlocks, a stand of old-growth hemlock on the area's western edge. Canoe or kayak the flowage for good looks at a variety of waterfowl, eagles and herons.

Directions: Property is located 7 miles northwest of Hayward on Hwy. 27. You can access a paved parking lot from Hwy. 27.

Amenities: Restrooms at parking lot.

Notes: The lake has excellent fishing (northern and panfish): there are boat landings on each end of the flowage.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE

Fall color near Hayward.

Taylor County

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest covers more than one-third of Taylor County, providing unlimited opportunities for hiking, camping, bird and wildlife watching, fishing and hunting. The county's 100 lakes, including the Mondeaux Flowage, add another dimension of water recreation.

In Medford, the county seat, you can visit the **Taylor County Historical Museum** (715/748-3808, www.medfordwis.com) featuring local history, including logging and the military history of the 724th engineering battalion. The city is also the southern trailhead for the **Pine Line Recreation Trail** (800/269-4505, www.medfordwis.com), a 26-mile railbed trail that runs north to Prentice in Price County.

In Gilman City Park you can cross the Yellow River on a swinging bridge, the only surviving swinging bridge in the state. West of Rib Lake, visit the Gerstberger Pines for a look at a true remnant of old growth forest. The county also boasts sixty miles of the Ice Age Trail, the trail's longest unbroken stretch.

74 Chequamegon Waters Flowage

Phone: 715/748-4875 (US Forest Service)

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

Signature Species: Osprey, Double-crested Cormorant, and Belted Kingfisher.

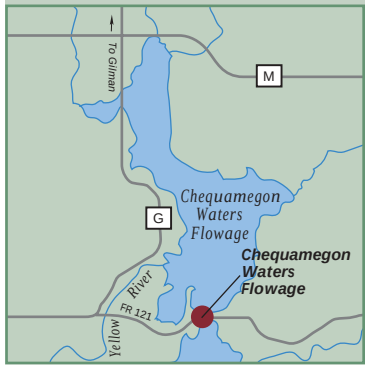
Admission: A parking fee may be charged at various sites around the flowage.

Hours: 24/7.

Seasonality: Tundra swans, Canada and Snow Geese in spring.

Accessibility: Viewing platforms and trails within the area are accessible.

Nearest food & lodging: In Medford, 20 miles east; or in Cornell, 20 miles west.



Easy roadside viewing of Northwoods' wildlife at this 2,714-acre flowage surrounded by northern hardwood forest. Drive, hike or canoe the area.

Directions: From Gilman travel east 0.5 mile on Hwy. 64, north 1.5 miles on Hwy. 73, east 3 miles on Cty. G to Forest Road 121, then east on FR 121 one mile to the Bayview Watchable Wildlife Site. You'll find a graveled parking area.

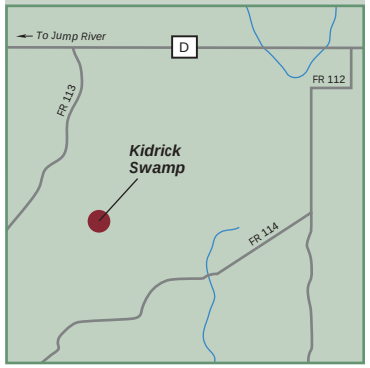
MIKE MCDOWELL

Belted Kingfisher.

Amenities: Restrooms, gravel trails, and a viewing platform.

75 Kidrick Swamp

Phone: 715/748-4875 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Rarities: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Medford, 25 miles southeast.

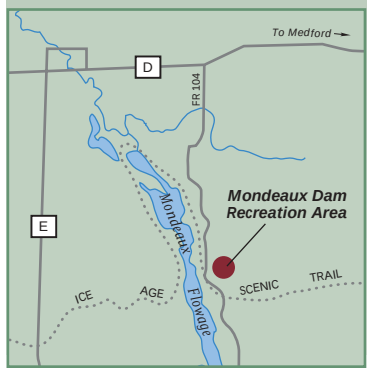


A 4,000-acre wetland with black spruce and tamarack swamp forest, largely open heath, with alder wetland shrub edges and smaller "islands" and peninsulas of second-growth mixed upland forest. Birds common to these habitats include the Lincoln Sparrow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-throated Sparrow, Golden-winged Warbler, Sedge Wren, Alder Flycatcher, Black and White Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Mourning Warbler.

Directions: This site is within the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. From Jump River travel east 7 miles on Cty. D, then south on FR 113 two miles – the swamp is on the east side of the road; or, from Jump River travel east 10 miles on Cty. D, then south 2 miles on FR 112, then southwest 2 miles on FR 114 – the swamp in on the west side of the road. Park along the road.

76 Mondeau Dam Recreation Area

Phone: 715/748-4875 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Signature species: Cerulean Warbler, and Bald Eagle.
Hours: 24/7.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.
Nearest food & lodging: Mondeaux Dam Lodge is a privately operated concession stand on the flowage.



The Mondeaux Dam and Flowage were built in the 1930s. In succeeding years, the 400-acre recreation area developed in the surrounding northern hardwood forest. It quickly became one of the best birding opportunities in the region. Plenty of easy access.

MIKE MCDOWELL
Lincoln Sparrow.

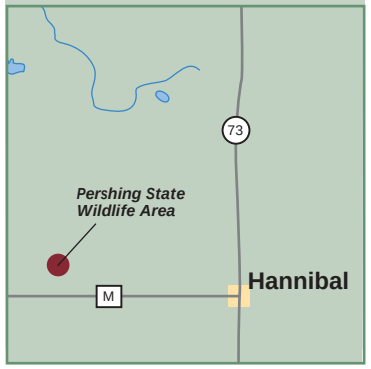
Directions: From Medford travel north 15.5 miles on Hwy. 13, west on Cty. D 6.5 miles, then south 1 mile on FR 104 (Mondeaux Dr.) to the entrance of the recreation area. Park in the paved parking lot.

Amenities: Restrooms, gravel trails, viewing platform, visitors center, gift shop.

Restrictions: Pets on a leash only.

77 Pershing State Wildlife Area

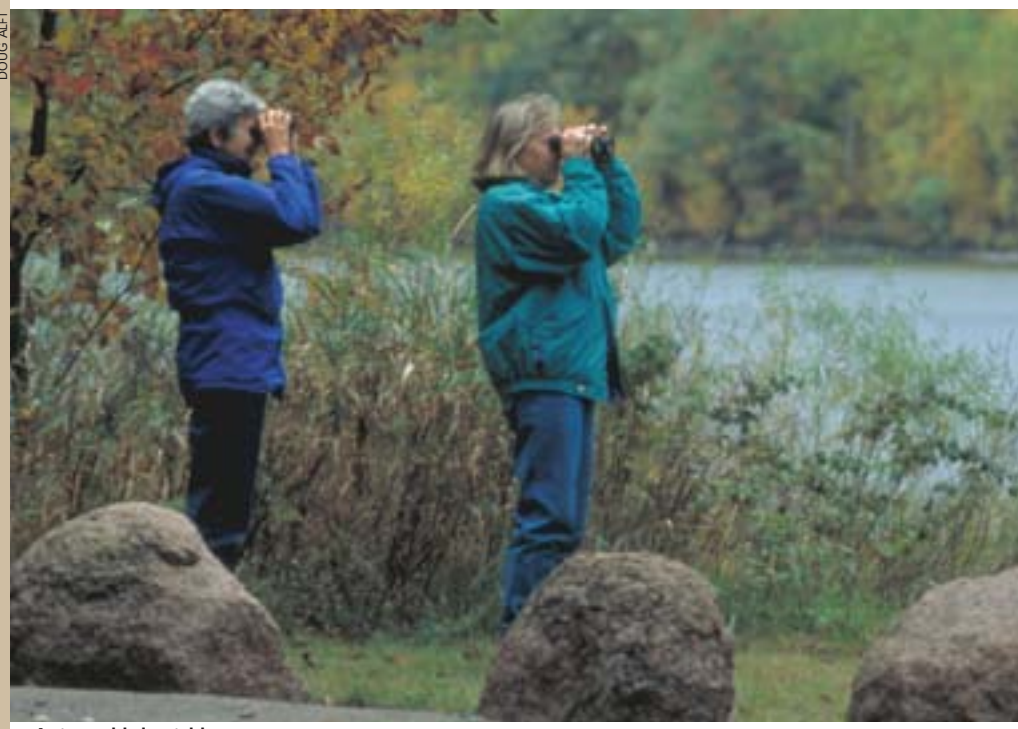
Phone: 715/532-3737 or 668-5644 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
GPS: 45degree 15' / 90 degree 50'
Signature species: Sharp-tailed Grouse.
Seasonality: April mornings just before sunrise to mid-morning are best to observe Sharp-tailed Grouse dancing on their display grounds, known as "leks." Blinds are available for reservation; blinds are very necessary to prevent disturbing Sharp-tails during their courtship performances.
Nearest food & lodging: In Gilman, 7 miles southeast.
Restrictions: Pets on leash during spring and summer.



Established in 1953, the Pershing Wildlife Area consists of two large and separate tracts, encompassing approximately 7,400 acres, which are intensively managed for the production of Sharp-tailed Grouse and waterfowl. The Fisher River and associated tributaries, which support several rare, threatened and endangered species, runs through the area. The property contains 15 flowages and gravel trails, as well as an osprey, cormorant and heron rookery.

RJ & LINDA MILLER
Whitetail Deer.

Directions: From Hannibal in western Taylor County, travel two miles west on Cty. M – the two lobes of the wildlife area lie north and south of Cty. M.


DOUG ALFT
Autumn birdwatching.

78 Yellow River Ice-walled Lake Plain

Phone: 715/762-2461 (US Forest Services)

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

Rarities: Cerulean Warbler and Swainson's Thrush. Rare spring ephemeral plants include dutchman's breeches, squirrel corn, trillium, trout lily, spring beauty, toothwort, hepatica, bulblet and goldies fern.

Seasonality: Spring is best for bird watching and seeing a stupendous spring wildflower display (best during last two weeks of May).

Nearest food & lodging: In Medford, 20 miles southeast.

This 200-acre site is unique as an "Ice-walled lake plain", a glacial feature with a flat, rich, fertile plateau. The area is a rich, mesic hardwood forest with mature stands of Sugar maple/basswood and hemlock/yellow birch, as well as Tamarack/black spruce swamp forest. Steep erosion ravines cut through the plain, where many fern species abound (including some rare ones). Bird species here include the Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, Wood Peewee, Yellow-throated Vireo, Black and White Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, American Redstart, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

Directions: From Perkinstown, which is west of Medford, go north on Cty. M to its junction with FR 112. Continue north on FR 112 about 1 mile to its junction with FR 575. Go west on FR 575 about 1.5 miles to its junction with FR 1547. FR 1547 is a gated road; park and walk past the gate, down the road. The site is on both sides of the road for about 1 mile.

Note: There are no established trails; but the woods are fairly open and easy to hike (bring a map and compass). There is a heron rookery one mile south; it's remotely located with no easy access, but worth the hike.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE

Along the National Ice Age Trail.

Vilas County

Vilas County spreads across the top of Wisconsin like a blue and green patterned-carpet. With more than 1,300 lakes, 73 rivers and streams, and a half million acres of forestland, the county is the heart of Wisconsin's famous Lakeland Vacationland.

In Manitowish Waters, the **North Lakeland Discovery Center** (877/543-2085, www.discovercenter.net) offers skill programs and 20 kilometers of trails for hiking, biking, X-C skiing, snowshoeing and wildlife watching. The 200,000-acre **Northern Highland/American Legion State Forest** (715/385-2727, www.wiparks.net) is headquartered in Boulder Junction. The **Vilas County Historical Society Museum** (715/542-3388, www.northern-wisconsin.com/museum/index.html) in Sayner displays the world's first snowmobile.

In Eagle River, bring the kids to the **Northwoods Children's Museum** (715/479-4623, www.northwoodschildrensmuseum.com) for family fun in their min-log cabin and fishing pond. See chainsaw sculptures and more at **Carl's Wood Art Adventure** (715/479-1883, www.carlswoodart.com). Or visit the **International Snowmobile Racing Hall of Fame and Museum** (715/542-4488, www.snowmobilehalloffame.com) in St. Germain.

79 Catherine Wolter Wilderness Area

Phone: 715/682-5789 (The Nature Conservancy)

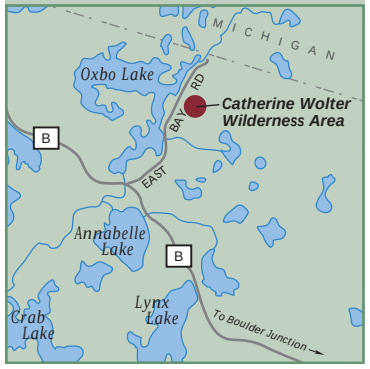
Web site: www.tnc.org/northamerica/states/wisconsin/preserves/art5844.html

Signature species: Black-throated Green and Black-throated Blue Warblers, American Redstarts, Golden-winged Warblers, Magnolia Warblers and Mourning Warblers, Common Loons, Osprey

Rarities: Bald Eagle.

Hours: Daylight hours.

Nearest food & lodging: In Presque Isle, 3 miles west.



This 2,189-acre Nature Conservancy state natural area includes 15 lakes and ponds. Common avian species include neotropical migrant songbirds Otter, fisher, black bear and timber wolves are known to frequent the preserve.

Directions: From Boulder Junction travel north 5 miles on Cty. M, turn northwest for 7 miles on Cty. B, turn northeast for 0.5 mile on East Bay Road. The trailhead is located on the east side of the road. There is a small parking area (10-15 cars) at the trailhead.

MIKE MCDOWELL

American Redstart.

80 Fallison Lake Nature Trail

Phone: 715/385-2727 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Signature species: Bald Eagle and Common Loon.
Rarities: Osprey.
Hours: 24/7.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer and fall.
Restrictions: No pets.
Nearest food & lodging: In Woodruff, 10 miles southwest.

This 2.5-mile loop trail rolls through a mixed coniferous/deciduous forest of balsam fir, hemlock, red pine, white pine, sugar maple, white birch, and large-toothed and trembling aspen. The trail crosses bogs and a hemlock glade. The longest loop of the trail goes all the way around 50-acre Fallison Lake.

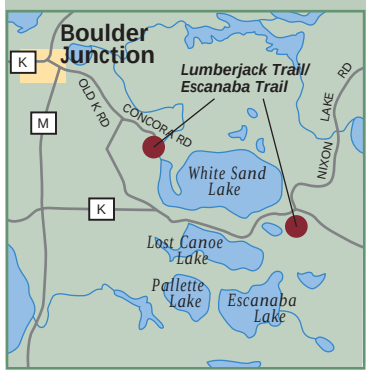
MIKE MCDOWELL
Young Great Horned Owls.

Directions: From Woodruff travel north 4 miles on Hwy. 51, turn northeast for 2.5 miles on Cty. M, turn east for 3.5 miles on Cty. N to the trailhead parking lot on the south side of the road.

Amenities: Boardwalks and a rustic nature center nearby.

81 Lumberjack/Escanaba Trails

Phone: 715/385-2400 (US Forest Service)
Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf
Signature species: Ruffed Grouse, Woodcock, and Bald Eagles.
Admission: A state vehicle parking sticker is required for parking.
Hours: 24/7.
Nearest food & lodging: In Boulder Junction, 2-5 miles northwest.



An 11-mile trail system around White Sand and Escanaba Lakes. Habitat types include forest, wetlands, lakes and a river.

Directions: There are two trailheads on the Lumberjack Trail. West Trailhead: From Boulder Junction travel southeast one mile on Old K Road, then east on Concora Road to the trailhead. East Trailhead: From Boulder Junction travel south 2 miles on Cty. M, then east 4 miles on Cty. K to the trailhead just past Nixon Lake Road. There are graveled/grass parking areas at both trailheads.

Amenities: Gravel trails and boardwalks.

Restrictions: Pets on leashes.

82 Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest

Phone: 715/385-2727 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.wiparks.net
Signature species: Alder Flycatchers, Vesper Sparrow, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.
Rarities: Gray Jay, Nelson's Sharp-tailed & LeConte's Sparrows, Bald Eagle, Osprey, and timber wolf.
Hours: The headquarters is open Mon-Fri 7:45am-4:30pm. The property is open 24/7.
Accessibility: The forest offers accessible campsites and picnic areas.
Nearest food & lodging: This is prime Wisconsin vacation country – you'll find many resorts and restaurants.

At 223,283 acres, the Northern Highland/American Legion State Forest is Wisconsin's largest property. It offers many campgrounds totaling 871 campsites; most offering water, showers, restrooms, swimming, fishing and a boat launch. The forest contains a diversity of northern timber types interspersed with grasslands, marshes, and more than 900 lakes. It is home to one of the largest Bald Eagle nesting concentrations in the world.

MIKE MCDOWELL
LeConte's Sparrow.

Directions: Forest headquarters are located on Trout Lake about 4.5 miles south of Boulder Junction on Cty. M. Stop for maps and information.

RJ & LINDA MILLER
Canada Geese in flight.

83 North Lakeland Discovery Center

Phone: 715/543-2085 (North Lakeland Discovery Center)
Web site: www.discoverycenter.net
Rarities: Osprey and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.
Hours: Daylight hours.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer & fall.
Nearest food & lodging: The Center offers both accommodations and food service. Otherwise, Manitowish Waters, 1.5 miles south offers all services.

A community-oriented educational center dedicated to exploring, preserving, and enhancing the area's natural, cultural, and historic resources. The Center is a former YCC camp with main lodge, kitchen, men's and women's dorms, eleven rustic bunkhouses, beach and sauna. It offers a year-round program of environmental education, including bird watching. The Center encompasses 66 acres including 25-acre Statehouse Lake and 20 miles of hiking trails. Common species include Semipalmated Plovers, Savannah Sparrows, Sandhill Cranes, Yellow Warblers, Dunlins, White-rumped Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Least Sandpipers.

Directions: From Manitowish Waters travel northeast on Cty. Hwy W 1.25 miles to the Center. Address is W215 Cty. Hwy. W. Paved parking.

Amenities: Restrooms, drinking fountain, gravel trails.

84 Powell Marsh State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/ 358-9207 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife
Signature species: Yellow Rail, LeConte's Sparrow, and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow.
Rarities: Yellow Rail, Short-eared Owl, Northern Harrier, American Bittern, and Merlin.
Seasonality: Best in spring, summer and fall.
Nearest food & lodging: In Manitowish Waters, 3 miles north.

The marsh, developed in 1955, is a 4,303-acre wetland complex of peatland, open water lakes and flowages, northern sedge meadows, and grassy upland islands. It supports a variety of waterfowl, water birds, migrant shorebirds, open-area birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Some species of special concern found at Powell include the Bald Eagle, Common Loon and Sharp-tailed Grouse.

Directions: From Manitowish Waters travel 1.5 miles southeast on Hwy. 51, turn south for 0.75 miles on Powell Road to Marsh Road with transects the marsh. There are three graveled parking lots.

Restrictions: 1,800-acre no-entry wildlife refuge from Sep 1-Dec 31.

Washburn County

Some 900 lakes sparkle within the borders of Washburn County in northwestern Wisconsin.

In Spooner, you can ride in elegant, refurbished railroad cars dating from 1910-30 on the **Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad** (715/635-3200, www.spoonertrainride.com). Spooner is also the home of the **Railroad Memories Museum** (715/635-3325, www.spoonerwi.com), displaying railway artifacts, photos, videos, equipment and model trains in the former C&NW depot. You can tour the largest musky-rearing hatchery in the world; the **Governor Tommy G. Thompson State Fish Hatchery** (715/635-4147, www.spoonerwi.com).

In Shell Lake, just south of Spooner, the **Museum of Woodcarving** (715/468-7100, www.washburncounty.com) displays 100 life-sized carvings depicting the life of Christ, including "The Last Supper." In Trego, just north of Spooner, arrange to canoe or "tube" down the scenic **Namekagon River**.

DOUG STAMM

Wild Turkey.

85 Beaver Brook State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/373-6165 (Wisconsin DNR)
Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

1,323 acres of stream, marsh and forest that includes about 2 miles of Beaver Brook. The property blends woods and marsh with tag alder thickets found along the brook. Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, waterfowl, eagles, American osprey, and furbearers call this place home.

Directions: From Spooner travel south about 1.5 miles on Hwy. 63, turn east on Wildlife Road one mile to the center of the property.

Amenities: 15 miles of hiking/ski trails, trout fishing

86 Hunt Hill Audubon Nature Center & Sanctuary

Phone: 715/635-6543 (Hunt Hill Audubon Nature Center)

Web site: www.audubon.org/local/sanctuary/hunthill

Rarities: Pileated Woodpeckers, Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawks, warblers, and Harris's Sparrows.

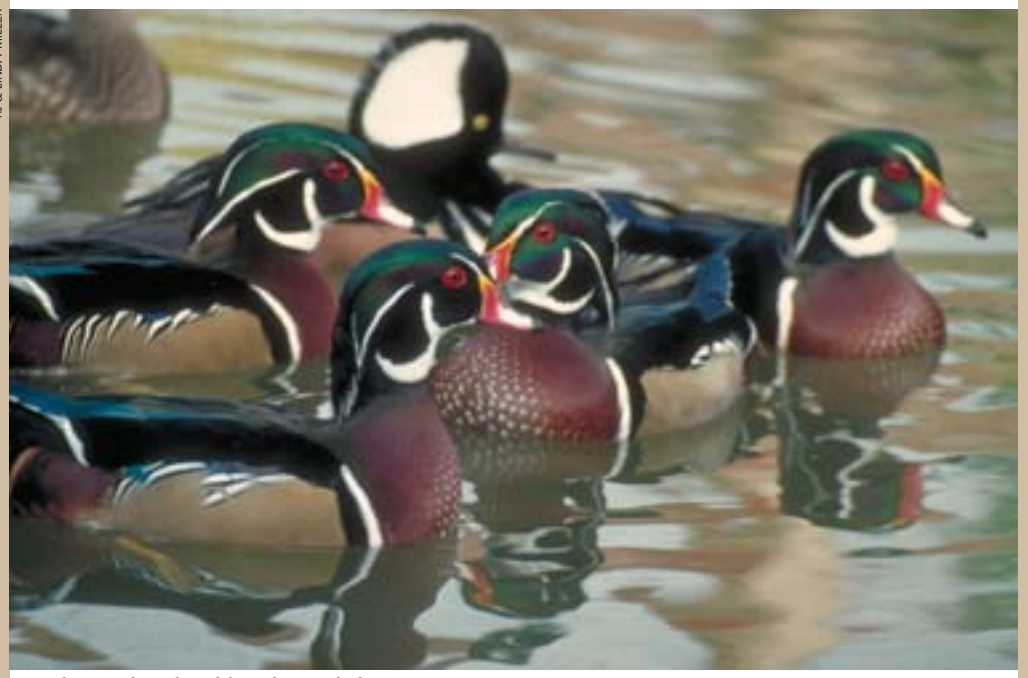
Admission fee: Voluntary entry fee for day use; established fees for course offerings and programs.

Hunt Hill is a year-round environmental education center with 500 acres of mature northern forest (oak, birch, aspen, white pine, ash), five glacial lakes, bogs, prairie/oak savanna, and marshy shorelines. The property includes two designated state natural areas and ten miles of hiking trails. Common species include Bald Eagles, Sandhill Cranes, Loons, Green Herons, Great Blue Herons, many warblers, songbirds, raptors, Ruffed Grouse, wild turkey, deer, otters, fisher, and bear. Self-guided hikes are encouraged, or optional.

Directions: From Sarona travel east 0.5 mile on Cty. D, turn north 0.5 mile on Cty. P, turn east on Audubon Road (watch for small, white sanctuary directional sign) 2 miles to Hunt Hill Road which is the gravel driveway into the sanctuary (watch for entrance sign on north side of road).

Amenities: Hunt Hill offers a variety of programs and course offerings year-round. Paid, naturalist-guided hikes can be scheduled. The Center's dining facilities and dormitories can accommodate groups up to 75. Other amenities include a library, campfire rings, waterfront/swimming beach and canoes.

RJ & LINDA MILLER



Male Wood Ducks with male Hooded Merganser.

87 Namekagon Visitor Center

Phone: 715/635-8346 (National Park Service)

Web site: www.nps.gov/sacn

Hours: Open seasonally Memorial Day through Labor Day, Thur-Mon, 9am-4pm, (closed Tues & Wed).

Accessibility: Building is accessible.

Nearest food & lodging: In Trego, 0.1 mile south.

The Center is a good place to get information on the wild and scenic Namekagon/St. Croix River system – 252 miles of river corridor to canoe or kayak. The river is perfect for the experienced paddler, passing wooded bluffs and small towns. Wildlife seen along the corridor includes Bald Eagles, Osprey, porcupine, wolves and many species of songbirds including warblers, thrushes, and vireos. The Center includes a logging and fur-trading museum, restrooms and drinking fountains.

MIKE MCDOWELL

Fox Sparrow.

Directions: The Center is located on Hwy. 63 in Trego just north of the junction of Hwy. 63 and Hwy. 53.

88 Sawyer Creek State Fisheries Area

Phone: 715/373-6165 (Wisconsin DNR)

Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife

Flycatchers, many species of warblers, Winter Wrens and thrushes are found here in good numbers. This property is divided into two units and both areas are good places to go to for wildlife viewing. There are lakes, trout streams, pine forest and mixed hardwood and pine forests.

Directions: From Spooner travel west 3 miles on Hwy. 70, turn south 2 miles on Greenfield Road to the property.

Notes: Trout fishing on Sawyer Creek.

More Sources of Tourism Information

County Contacts

These contacts, in each of the eighteen counties in the Lake Superior/Northwoods region, are ready to help you plan you outdoor adventure. They can suggest accommodations and restaurants, as well as attractions and other historical, cultural and environmental opportunities.

Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce
715/623-4134, 888/526-4523
www.visitashland.com

Bayfield County Tourism & Recreation
715/779-3335, 800/447-4094
www.bayfield.org

Barron County Clerk's Office
715/537-6200
www.co.barron.wi.us/tourism.htm

Burnett County Department of Tourism & Information
715/349-7411, 800/788-3164
www.burnettcounty.com

Superior-Douglas County CVB
715/392-2773, 800/942-5313
www.visitsuperior.com

Florence County Visitor Center
715/528-5377, 888/889-0049
www.florencewisconsin.com

Forest County Advertising Committee
715/478-2212, 800/334-3387
www.forestcountywi.com

Iron County Development Zone Council
715/561-2922
www.ironcountywi.com

Langlade County/Antigo Area Chamber of Commerce
715/623-4134, 888/526-4523
www.antigochamber.com

Lincoln County/Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce
715/536-9474, 877/907-2757
www.merrillchamber.com
or
Lincoln County/Tomahawk Regional Chamber of Commerce
715/453-5334, 800/569-2160
www.gototomahawk.com

Oneida County Visitor's Bureau
715/365-7466, 800/236-3006
www.oneidacountywi.com

Polk County Information Center
715/483-1410, 800/222-7655
www.polkcountytourism.com

Price County Tourism Department
715/339-4505, 800/269-4505
www.pricecountywi.net

Rusk County Visitors Center
715/532-2642, 800/535-7875
www.ruskcounty.org

Sawyer County/Hayward Lakes VCB
715/634-8662, 800/724-2992
www.haywardlakes.com

Taylor County Tourism
715/748-4729, 888/682-9567
www.medfordwis.com

Vilas County Advertising & Publicity Dept.
715/479-3649, 800/236-3649
www.vilas.org

Washburn County/Spooner Area Tourism
715/635-9696, 800/367-3306
www.washburncounty.org

State & National Contacts

Wisconsin Department of Tourism
800/432-8747
www.travelwisconsin.com

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
608/266-2621
www.dnr.state.wi.us

Wisconsin Indian Head Country Tourism
715/924-2970, 800/826-6966
www.wisconsinindianhead.org

Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
715/362-1371
www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

National Audubon Society
800/542-2748
www.audubon.org/states/wi/

Top Ten Things Birders might want to bring on their next Wisconsin foray

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

10. Your clubs – Wisconsin has more than 400 golf courses available for public play. Can you say "Tee time?"

9. Your Creel – To put the trout in you're gonna catch on any of Wisconsin's 2,444 cold water streams.

8. Your Camping Gear – You'll need it at any of the 5,535 campsites in Wisconsin's 60 state parks and forests.

7. Your Swimming Suit – There's a million acres of water in Wisconsin. If that's not enough, you may stay at a hotel with a pool. And if you've brought the kids/grandkids… can you say "Waterpark?"

6. Your canoe – The better to be silent on any of Wisconsin's 15,000 lakes.

5. Your Bike – More than 1,000 miles of surfaced bike trails throughout Wisconsin.

4. Your Antiquing Guide – Whoa, better bring the credit card too.

3. Your Camera – It's gonna be gorgeous out there.

2. Your Appetite – For a cuppa Joe, a slice of pie and a little ala mode at a home-cookin' café.

1. Your Gazetteer and Compass – Two things John Muir never forget.

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"Short Eared Owl" by Jack Bartholmai

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Endangered Resources Program
WDNR
P.O. 7921
Madison, WI 75707
(608) 266-7012.

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