

Nature Land County Park
Walworth County, Wisconsin

High Wilderness Trail

By:

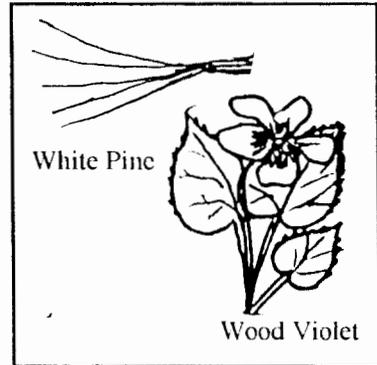
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Highland Wilderness Trail

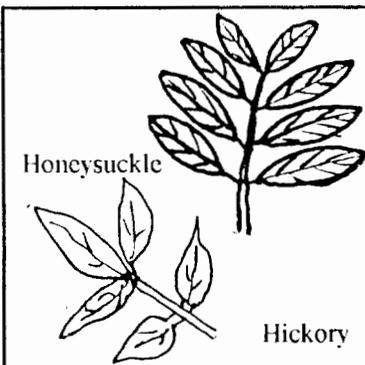
This path takes in coniferous as well as deciduous trees. It is a beautiful walking path with much bird life. Keep an eye out for different kinds of ferns while walking the trail.

1. As you begin the trail, you will see **white pine** on your left and a variety of deciduous trees on your right. The path has many **violets** (heart-shaped leaves), **raspberries**, and **burdock**. As you walk, notice the moss on the side of the trees.



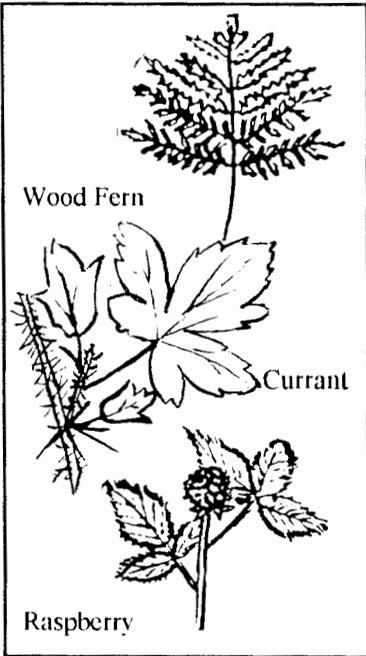
2. As we near the next marker, the color of the tree trunks change to a reddish color, thus **red pine**. Many **raspberry** bushes grow nearby. If you examine the raspberry, often you will find both ends connected to the ground. The raspberry propagates or multiplies in this way. Notice the small **fern** growing in the path.

3. Deciduous trees can be seen behind the row of conifers. The forest floor has abundant vegetation under the deciduous trees whereas the coniferous area has little to no vegetation. This is due to the acidity of the pine trees and needles.



4. The trees are very tall with leaves and branches near the top. It is evident that they are reaching for sunlight. You will see **aspen** and **red oak** as canopy trees with **black walnut** and **shagbark hickory** in the understory, and **honeysuckle** as part of the shrub stage. The layers of the forest are quite evident.

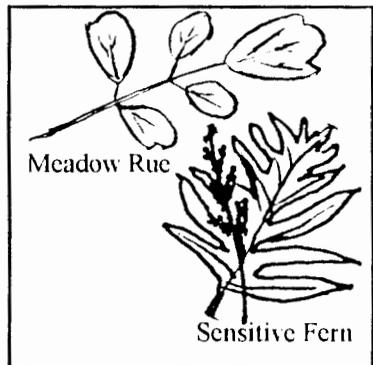
5. As the trail turns east, a large patch of fern is growing. These fern are **wood fern** which are relatively short. Examine the underside of the blade or leaf. You may see sori or little brown spots which are clusters of spores in the reproduction process. Not



all fern have these spots. Look at the woody stemmed plant with the hairy or prickly stem, it is a **currant** bush. **Multiflora rose** and **raspberry** bushes are quite prevalent.

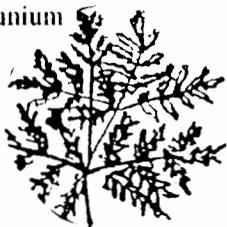
6. You will walk down a slight grade and see **spruce** trees. Remember from the other trails that the spruce has 4 sided square needles that can be rolled between two fingers. **Meadow rue** with its small and dainty leaves is growing along the path. Tall **quaking aspen** tower over the area. Listen to the leaves blow in the wind. The leaves have a flattened stem or petiole which makes the leaf "quake".

7. The path forks at this point. Take the left trail, as the right one is under renovation. Here you will see **white pine**. It has 5 soft needles in a bunch. Notice the kettle are in the center of the woods. **Hickory**, **aspen**, and **oak** trees are growing in the area. Look for a new fern on the path, **sensitive fern**. It looks much different than the wood fern.





Wild Geranium



Rattlesnake Fern

8. To the left of the trail is **thimbleweed** and **wild geranium** which both bloom in early summer.

9. This is an interesting fern patch. Notice 3 blades emerging off one stem or stipe as it is called. This is **rattlesnake fern**.

10. The next part of the trail follows along Territorial Road. **Sumac** lines the way. You can see **thimbleweed**, **strawberries**, and **raspberries**.

Flowers of the area

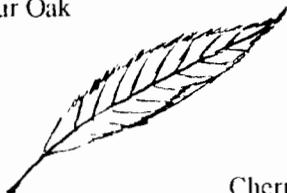
include **goldenrod**, **asters**, **daisy fleabane**, and **black-eyed Susans**.

11. Stop and look at the large tree. How old do you think it could be? It is a **bur oak** because of the rounded lobes and gnarly branches. Look around at trees nearby. You will see a smaller **hickory** with 5 or 7 leaflets, a **cherry** tree with a single lance-shaped leaf and **boxelder** which have 3 leaflets.

As you finish the trail, I think you will agree how aesthetically pleasing this trail is. The peacefulness is relaxing and bird songs are abundant.



Bur Oak



Cherry



Boxelder