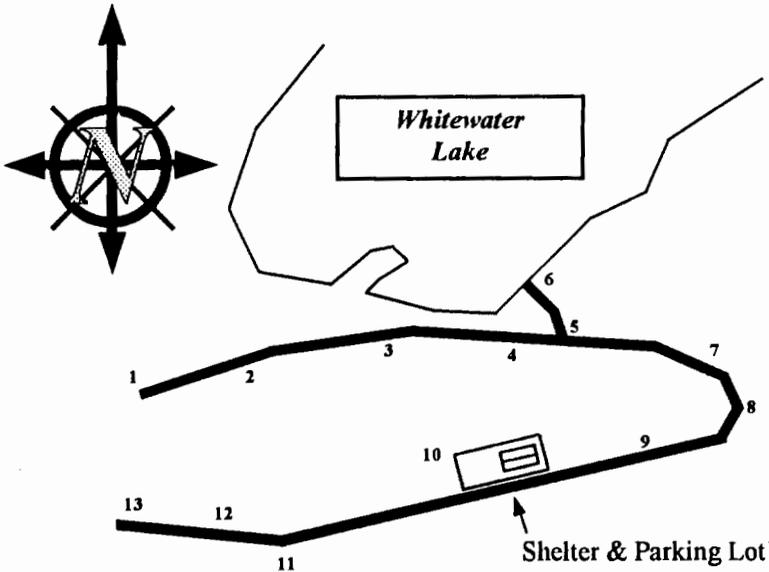


Nature Land County Park
Walworth County, Wisconsin

Vista Trail

By:
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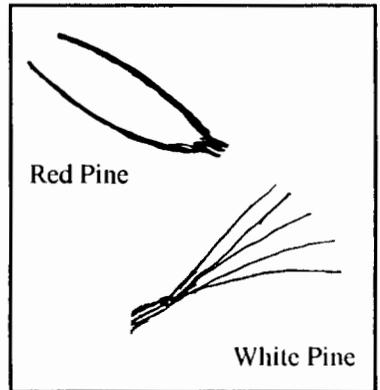


Vista Trail

This is the beginning of the Vista Trail. Turn around and look at the beautiful open park area. Here you will see many **maple trees** overhanging the **spring fed streams**. The streams feed crystal clear water into Whitewater Lake. The water runs through the ground and gets purified. These springs can be seen bubbling out of the ground in many places. The large-tubed plants near the stream are called **Angelica**. The stream should have small leafed plants in it (**watercress**). At this time the stream seems void of the watercress. Along the stream edges, closer to the lake, you will find **marsh marigold** (yellow flowers) in the spring and **spotted jewelweed** (orange flowers) in the fall. The jewelweed expels the seed when touched by another object thus a nickname Touch-me-nots.

1. If you look in the grassy area, you will see **plantain** growing abundantly. The leaves are arranged in a whorl, with a seed stalk coming up through the center. Near the marker grows **garlic mustard**. It is very abundant with a white flower in May and June. Common **wood violets** are also seen near the marker. They have a heart-shaped leaf. **Wild strawberries** lie ahead on the path. They have three tiny leaves which are low to the ground.

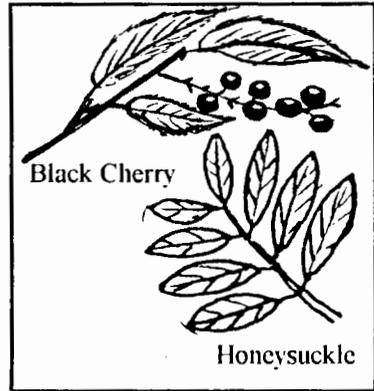
2. This area has very tall pines which are **Norway or red pine**. You can tell this tree by the reddish bark and long needles (4 to 6 in.). There is a colony of **hickories** amongst these pine. Hickories have a compound leaf with 5 or 7 leaflets. Look at the various kinds of tree bark around this area.



3. There is much ground cover near this spot. Later on, the path will have little to no vegetation. This is due to the shade of the large trees and also the acidity of decomposing needles. Notice the pretty **wood fern**. You will be walking through rows and rows of pine. It is obvious that humans planted this stand of pines. You will find it very quiet walking on the forest floor due to the layer of dead needles called **duff**.

4. Notice the change in pines. We left **red pine** behind us and find **white pine** at this marker. The white pine is easy to distinguish because it has 5 needles to a cluster. The needles also tend to be very soft to the touch. Watch for different types of pine cones. **Solomon's plume** is found throughout the path but can be seen at this marker.

5. Look for a **black cherry** tree here. It has a lance-shaped single leaf. The bark has horizontal gray marks on the small branches and trunk. These are called **lenticels** and are breathing holes for the cherry tree.



6. Take a closer look at the lake. Can you see birds, hear insects, frogs or even fish? Often in the fall, ducks and geese can be seen on the water. On the way back up the path, notice the rocks left here by the glacier. These rocks were pushed along in front of the glacier and deposited here as the glacier started to melt. **Honeysuckle** can also be seen on both sides of the path. It will bloom in pretty pinks, and whites in the spring. **Wild geranium** is abundant on the trail. It blooms in June with a delicate pink blossom. A patch of **meadow rue** can be seen on the right side of this trail.

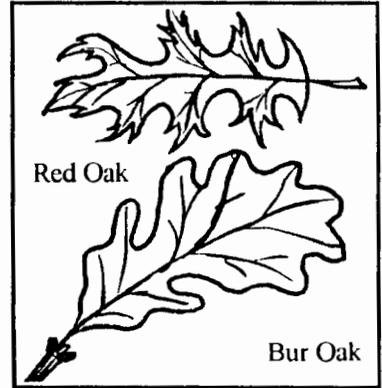
7. **Cherry trees** can be seen here along with some small oaks. Look for dead branches containing **fungi** along the way.

8. There are many **vines** in the area. At this time they appear to be dead, but once were living and climbing these trees. **Wild geranium** can be seen to the right of the marker. It is very abundant up near the road. There are also many **shagbark hickories** behind this marker. In spring, these trees start out with a beautiful green tulip-like "bloom" which is the beginning of the leafing out process.

9. This tree, with the light green bark, is a **largetooth aspen**. It has a flattened stem or petiole which makes the leaf appear to flap in the wind. This type of tree is often used in the pulp industry. Behind you, on the

fence and small trees, you will find **grapevine**. These vines wrap around the host with the help of little **tendrils** or curly tails. Eventually, the grapevine could take over the tree..

10. In the clearing, you can see the **Nature Center Building** which can be used by obtaining a permit. Look beyond at the pines. This is certainly a good place to count each whorl of branches to get a good estimate of the tree's age. Standing in the driveway, you will see a **northern red oak** with bristle-tipped lobes. The **bur oak** can also be seen nearby with smooth and rounded lobes. There is more **Solomon's plume** in this area. There are many types of **Solomon's plume**. During blooming time, some Solomon's plume will flower at the tip with a yellow-white flower (False Solomon's plume) while another type (True Solomon's plume) will have yellow-green bell-shaped flowers hanging under the plant. Both kinds can be seen on the trail.



11. Notice the large boulders at this marker. They were brought down by the glacier and deposited here. The boulders are often **granite boulders**. **Moss and lichens** (gray green patches) are covering the rocks. These lichens are the first step in the decomposition and beginning of soil formation.

12. Here you can find **red cedar**. It is a prickly conifer but much liked by the bird community. The **red pines** are prevalent or maybe we should call them the **Norway pines**. Norway, Maine was the first lumbering center for this tree. **Bedstraw** can also be seen. It is a light green sticky plant (it can stick to your clothes). Pioneers used bedstraw as a filler for mattresses.

13. Be careful at station M. **Poison ivy** has been spotted here. It has three green leaves which can cause a rash or blisters.

This is the end to our Vista trail. We hope you have "seen" the forest in a new way with the help of this guide.