

Welcome to Forest Park Nature Center

Why We Are Here...

At Forest Park, we strive to promote an awareness, understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

Only .07 of 1% of Illinois remains as the first settlers found it. Forest Park comprises some of that vanishing land. To further protect this rare treasure, the Peoria Park District and the Forest Park Foundation have dedicated this park as an Illinois State Nature Preserve. Nature Preserve status ensures permanent protection under state law for all features of the park.

More than 80,000 people annually benefit from Forest Park's interpretive and recreational programs. Our challenge is to provide visitors with the best possible experience, while preserving Forest Park's unique natural features.

Proper Stewardship of a Treasure...

In order to maintain the biodiversity of Forest Park, the Peoria Park District, in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy's Volunteer Stewardship Network, has initiated an active stewardship program that includes scientific research, exotic and invasive species removal, plant and animal monitoring and prescribed burning.

For more than 8,300 years, the Oak Hickory Forests of Central Illinois have been shaped by periodic fires. Our prescribed burns are designed to reintroduce this natural force in a safe and ecologically sound manner. These fires burn slowly through the leaf litter, with flames seldom reaching over one foot tall. Prescribed burns allow more sunlight to reach the forest floor and result in more native wildflowers and grasses.

Become a CORE Member.....

You can help support Forest Park Nature Center by becoming a CORE Member for a nominal fee. In return we will send you the *Tracks and Trails* Newsletter six times per year. *Tracks and Trails* is packed with natural history facts, program information and Nature Center news. Your membership also entitles you to a 10 percent discount on all items in the Trailhead Nature Store.

What You Can Do To Help...

Pets: The trails of Forest Park are regularly used by wildlife as well as people. The lingering scent of pets can discourage animals from denning near trails, thus making it difficult to see them or their tracks.

Pets can also transmit parasites and disease. Therefore, please leave pets at home.

Collecting: Within the nature preserve, everything is protected by law. Your aid in maintaining the "untouched"

quality of Forest Park will help us provide a pristine area for future generations to come.

Trail Courtesy: In our modern world, quiet and serenity are precious commodities. Help us maintain the special quality of our forest by refraining from loud talking and the use of radios. Litter also ruins the view for other hikers. Please dispose of it properly.

Please Stay on the Trail: With over 80,000 visitors per year, Forest Park could sustain considerable impact from 160,000 feet! Everyone who steps off trails destroys plants. Please walk on designated trail surfaces only.

Bikes and Skis: Our trails are made specifically for foot travelers. For everyone's safety, no bikes or skis, please.

The Nature Center and Nature Store are open: Mon-Sat, 9 am - 5 pm, Sun, 1 pm - 5 pm
Trails are open every day from dawn to dusk.
Call (309) 686-3360 for more information.

Make Your Hike More Enjoyable...

Bites!

The only wild animal in the woods that will actively seek you out and bite is the mosquito! If insects bother you, we recommend a repellent to make your visit more enjoyable (available in our store).

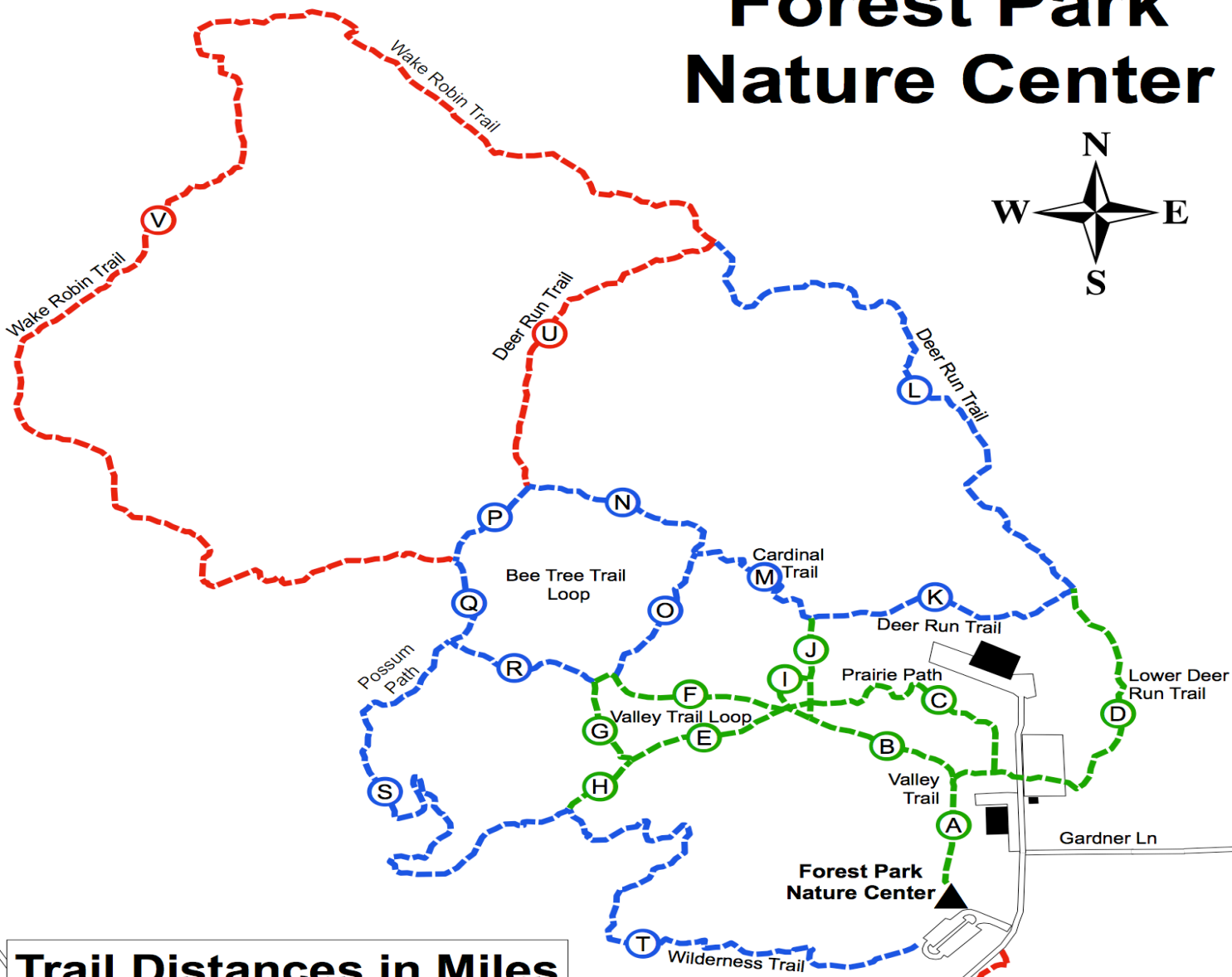
Listening Points!

A listening point is "a place of quiet where the world can be contemplated with awe." We have located several listening points along the trail that offer unique opportunities to enjoy sounds of nature. Make sure they become part of your next hike.

Make Your Next Hike Count!

Become a Hundred Mile Hiker and keep track of your miles. For a nominal fee, paid at the Trailhead Nature Store, your mileage can go toward receiving an incentive award. Ask a naturalist for details.

Forest Park Nature Center



Trail Distances in Miles

A	.11	K	.20	U	.30
B	.10	L	.42	V	1.31
C	.17	M	.14	W	1.25
D	.30	N	.14		
E	.10	O	.13		
F	.11	P	.08		
G	.08	Q	.08		
H	.06	R	.11		
I	.04	S	.49		
J	.09	T	.54		



Difficulty Rating

Ratings based on length of trail and challenge of terrain

- Easy
- Medium
- Hard