



Guidelines to visiting The Nature Conservancy's preserves.

Nature Conservancy preserves are private properties. They are managed to protect our fragile resources – native species and plant communities. You will find few trails or facilities. The trails we do maintain or create are designed to steer visitors away from the most fragile portions of the preserve and toward those areas that can handle more use. Please do not journey off the trail. Signs requesting visitors to not hike beyond certain areas are placed there to ensure your safety as well as frail natural communities. We ask you to please tread lightly and leave the nature preserve in the same or better condition as you found it.

Most of our preserves are open to visitors, but only for low-impact recreational activities (see list below). Those preserves harboring species or natural communities at risk, however, are not open to the public.

You will not find any staff on duty at Nature Conservancy preserves. Therefore, we ask you to prepare for your visit and take proper precautions while on site.

Preparation: The Key to Safe & Enjoyable Visit

Wear comfortable footwear suitable for hiking, but please do not wear heavy, cleated boots – these damage the trails. To protect yourself from ticks, poison ivy or poison sumac, wear long pants and tuck them into your socks. No matter which season of the year it is, each person in your party should bring a full water bottle. Dehydration is a serious risk at any time of the year.

Many of our preserves allow deer hunting from October through the first week of January, so wearing blaze orange is suggested when hiking in these areas during hunting season. For more information on why we allow hunting and a list of preserves that allow hunting, [click here](#).

What to Bring

To get the most from your visit, and to protect yourself from the elements, you may want to include the following items in your backpack:

- Binoculars
- Camera
- Compass
- Field guides (wildflowers, birds, butterflies & other natural features)
- First aid kit
- Insect repellent
- Rain gear
- Snack (fruit or trail mix)
- Sunscreen
- Water

What You Can Do

The following activities are permitted on Conservancy preserves:

- Birdwatching
- Hiking
- Nature Study
- Photography

What You Cannot Do

The following activities are not permitted on Conservancy preserves:

- Pets may accompany you but they must be kept on a leash and on the trail at all times.
- Biking and mountain biking
- Camping, campfires and cooking
- Caving
- Driving an ATV or off-road vehicle
- Fishing (except by permit at Kankakee Sands) or trapping
- Geocaching
- Horseback riding
- Hunting (except by permit on designated preserves)
- Picking flowers, berries, nuts or mushrooms
- Removing any part of the natural landscape (shells, rocks, etc.)
- Rappelling
- Rock climbing
- Snowmobiling

Respect Our Neighbors' Property

Please do not trespass (or park) on private property adjacent to Conservancy preserves. Property lines are clearly marked with yellow signs featuring the Conservancy's logo.

Contact Us

If you have any additional questions regarding the preserves, please contact The Nature Conservancy. Also, if you come across any form of vandalism on the property or if there are any natural situations that need tending to, please let us know.

(317) 951-8818