

## Interpretive Trail

### 1. Vernal Pond

This area is a seasonal pond which holds water from spring rains and the run-off of melting snow. Water lasts well into the summer so this is a spring stop over for migrating birds and home to nesting mallards. Frogs, toads, and salamanders breed here in the spring.

### 2. Shrub Thicket

The central area was historically used for farming. Evidence remains of an irrigation system and many strawberry plants can be found. The area is now thick with invasive shrubs which are being removed through volunteer efforts. Native oaks are being planted and will mingle with the dogwood and hawthorn already here.

### 3. Oak-Hickory Woods

Over the decades oaks & hickories have moved into this area from a row of mature trees that can still be seen along the property line. These woodlands contain canopy openings that let enough sunlight through to support grasses and wildflowers on the forest floor. In the spring trout lily and spring beauty can be seen here.

### 4. Walnut-Cottonwood Community

This area was once dominated by ash and elm trees, but now black walnut trees are seen on the higher ground where soil is drier and cottonwoods can be found in the poorly drained bottomland. This is an example of ecosystems evolving as one species increases and another decreases or disappears over time. The ashes died between 2003 and 2008 because of an

emerald ash borer infestation. The roots of black walnut trees produce a substance toxic to many plants. However, raspberries, which are immune to the toxins put out by the walnut trees, grow well here.

### 5. Old Apple Orchard

A farmhouse was on the property near here until the early 1980s. Its foundation is still present and cultivated flowers can be found surrounding it. Apple trees from the old orchard are scattered throughout the area.

### 6. Wet Meadow

Wet meadows are open sites with few shrubs or trees. They are similar to prairies, but wetter. This meadow is part of a wetland that is almost an acre in size. Wetlands provide habitat for diverse plant and animal communities, and are natural water treatment systems because they catch and hold rain water and run-off. This area remains wet well into the summer. The plant with the huge leaves and late summer yellow flowers is Elecampane, a plant originally from England.

### 7. Old Field Communities

These small, open sites are home to a mixture of wildflowers, grasses, and scattered shrubs. They are great places to look for birds and butterflies. Plants found here include aster, goldenrod, thimbleweed, chicory, Queen Anne's lace, milkweed, and sunflowers.

In spring and early summer, look for the pink-purple blossoms of wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*)

## How You Can Help

- Landscape your own property with plants native to southeastern Michigan. Many invasive plant populations originate from ornamental plantings. NAP has a native landscaping brochure series that can help get you started.
- Compost yard waste in your backyard or through the city's composting program.
- When in natural areas, stay on trails and keep pets leashed.
- Volunteer! NAP is always in need of volunteers to help with restoration and monitoring projects.

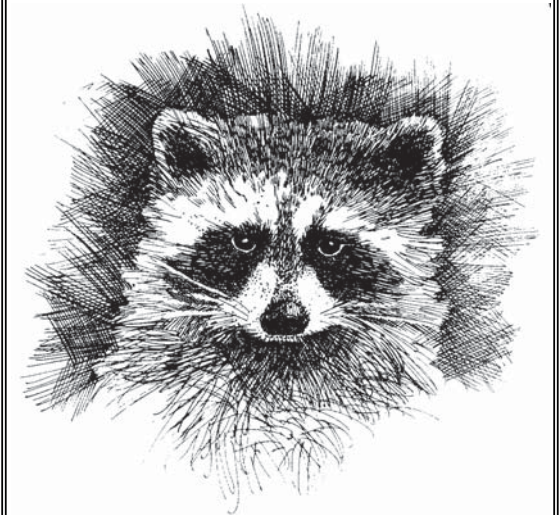
This brochure was developed by the Friends of Dicken Woods, the Leslie Science & Nature Center, and Natural Area Preservation.

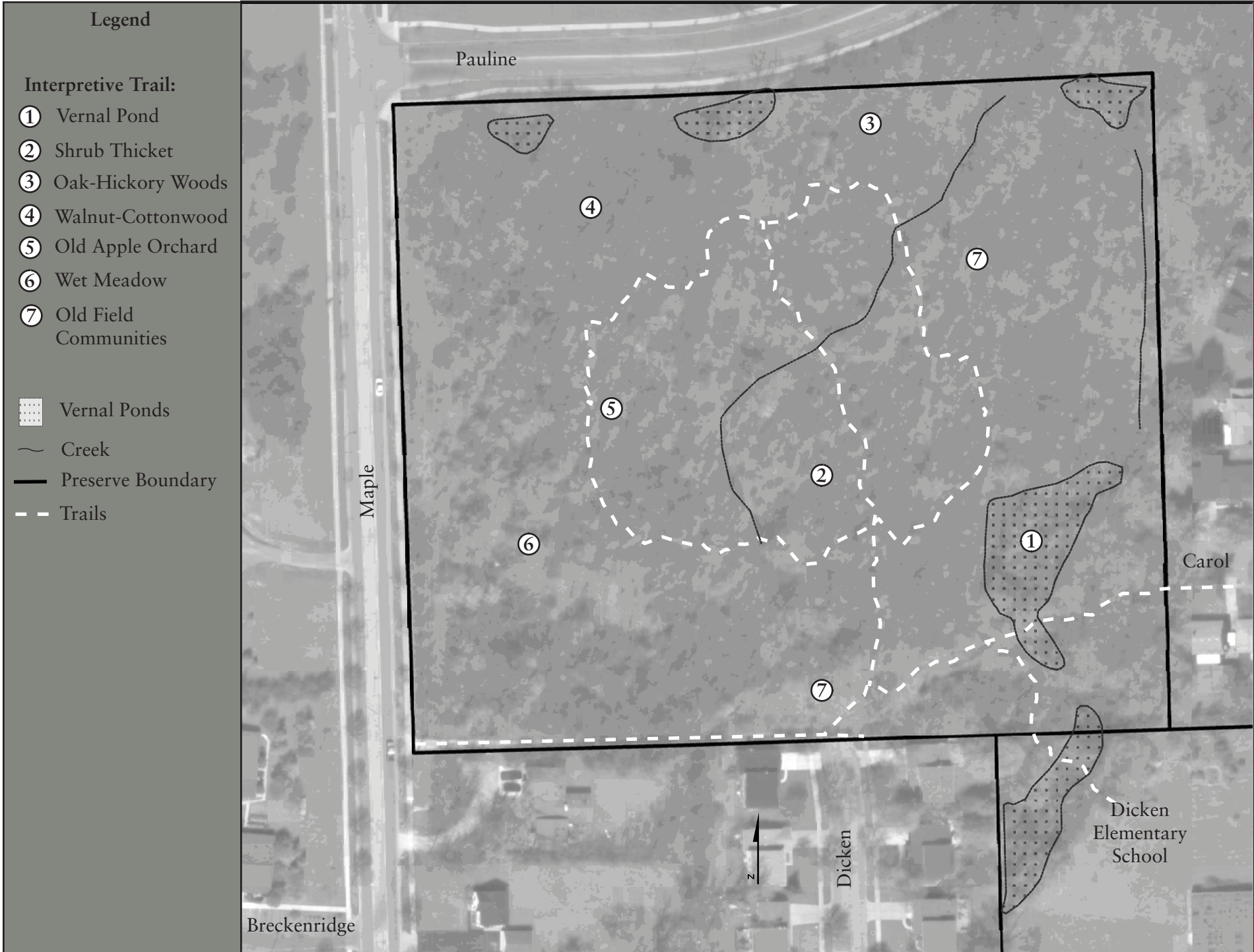


City of Ann Arbor  
**Natural Area  
Preservation**

If you are interested in supporting our ongoing ecological restoration efforts, or for more information, contact  
Natural Area Preservation  
734.794.6627  
nap@a2gov.org - www.a2gov.org/nap

# Dicken Woods Nature Area





## History of Dicken Woods

This ten-acre natural area consists of woodlands and wetlands. The land was acquired by the city in the fall of 2003 after a group of neighbors known as the Friends of Dicken Woods came together to save it from development. Headwaters of Allen's Creek and Mallett's Creek lie within this park. These are both important environmental tributaries within the city. Once the property became part of the city's park system, stewardship and restoration became the focus of the Friends of Dicken Woods. Their goals are to protect, preserve and improve the property.

## Birds seen in Dicken Woods

### Year-round residents:

Eastern Screech Owl, Downy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, American Goldfinch, Northern Cardinal, Black-capped Chickadee, Cedar Waxwing, Blue Jay, House Finch.

### Breeding migrants:

(arrive in spring, breed, depart in autumn)  
 Gray Catbird, House Wren, Indigo Bunting, Red-eyed Vireo, Eastern Phoebe, Common Yellowthroat, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, and finally American Robin and Northern Flicker, both of which can be present in winter though far more common in spring and summer.