

Interpretive Trail Loop

The trail loop is 1/3 mile long and can be used for hiking, bicycling, cross country skiing, and enjoying nature. Please respect golfers by staying on trails in the woods and not venturing onto the golf course. Descriptions below correspond to numbered posts along the trails and on the map in this brochure.

1. In Michigan, oak-hickory forests occur in the south where drier and warmer conditions occur. In some places the canopy opens up, allowing enough sunlight through, so that grasses and wildflowers can grow beneath. This is characteristic of an oak savanna or oak woodland community.

2. This area contains several interesting woodland plant species. In the spring, look for the white flowers of common trillium blanketing the forest floor. Wild geranium, jewelweed, and Canada mayflower are prevalent, as are less showy spring wildflowers like May-apple and Jack-in-the-pulpit.

3. The interpretive trail continues eastward from this post. In the fall, look for blue-stemmed goldenrod along the path.

4. A native plant garden was created here. This area is partly shady with sandy soil and a lot of oak leaf litter. Plants here include: wild columbine and blue lobelia (both frequented by Ruby-throated hummingbirds), nodding wild onion, woodland sunflower, white snakeroot, wood sedge, Sprengel's sedge, heart-leaved aster, and zigzag goldenrod.

(cont.) The bench here was restored by an Eagle Scout and is a nice place to enjoy birds. These woods are home to some remarkable bird species. Acadian Flycatchers, Cerulean Warblers, Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers, Wood Thrushes, Red-eyed Vireos, and Indigo Buntings have all been observed here.

5. Red foxes live near this area. They prefer the patchwork of woodland, open area, and edge habitat found here. Opportunistic predators like the red fox help to keep populations of small mammals in check, preventing overbrowsing of native wildflowers and reducing the amount of carrion in our parks.

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

Invasive Plants

Invasive species like buckthorn, honeysuckle, and garlic mustard can reduce the presence of oaks and spring wildflowers in a forest. Buckthorn and honeysuckle shrubs form dense thickets that prevent woody seedling regeneration and forest floor growth. Garlic mustard outcompetes native wildflowers and some tree seedlings. To limit the spread of invasives, they are physically removed and prescribed ecological burns are performed. Native plants have adapted to fire and benefit from it, while invasive plants have not evolved this adaptation and are therefore negatively affected by fire.

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 Natural Area Preservation volunteer Curtis Vincze, Troop 4, as part of his Eagle Scout Project.



If you are interested in supporting our ongoing ecological restoration efforts, or for more information, contact
Natural Area Preservation
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Huron Hills Golf Course Woods



Welcome to Huron Hills Golf Course Woods

This 23-acre preserve at Huron Hills Golf Course consists of two oak-hickory woodlands. The woods and adjoining golf course were acquired by the city from the University of Michigan in 1951. Although the land had been used as a private golf course since 1922, several years had passed without proper maintenance. During the early 1950s, additional parcels were purchased from private landowners. Shortly thereafter, construction of additional holes and cleanup of existing greens began. Huron Hills Golf Course was opened for play in July 1955. NAP began managing the woods in 2002, mainly through prescribed ecological burns and invasive species removal.



Aerial view of Huron Hills Golf Course (outlined in white) and Woods, with Huron River in background (photo by John Sullivan)