

While people who attempt to "rescue" wildlife babies have good intentions, they have the opposite effect. Most wildlife babies are still under direct care of their parents after leaving the nest. Many wildlife babies die soon after capture from the stress of being handled, improper nourishment, or other human caused sicknesses. "Rescuing a baby from its mother" not only shows bad judgment, it also is illegal.

13. Wildlife Babies



14. Walnut Trees



Black Walnut trees have long been prized for their attractive, decay resistant wood. The roots extrude a substance called juglone, which is a natural herbicide that limits competition. Walnuts are also a nutritious food source for animals like squirrels, raccoons, and turkeys.

15. Animal Tracks

Coyote



Opossum



Turkey



16. Wood Duck Boxes



Wood ducks share a familiar story with many animals of the start of the 20th century in that overharvesting, along with the habitat destruction drove them to the brink of extinction. Hunting regulations brought a dramatic rebound of wood duck populations. Their recovery is also assisted by habitat restoration such as artificial nesting structures called wood duck boxes.

Despite its name, Virginia waterleaf is found throughout Eastern North America. It was likely first identified by colonists in Virginia.

The second part of its name comes from the pale markings on the young leaves which resemble water stains on paper.

17. Virginia Waterleaf



18. Spring Bird Migrations



Many people assume that bird migrations are triggered by temperature, but they are actually triggered more by food availability and daylength. The males of many bird species show up first to prepare for mating and nesting season. Birds like red-wing blackbirds show up earlier because their mating season is earlier. They are soon followed by other favorites like orioles and red-headed woodpeckers.

Spring brings to mind the smell of rain, flowers, and....skunks?! Skunks are more active in the spring during their mating season and are often flooded out of their dens from spring rains. Don't worry, you are not likely to run into a skunk during your hike because they are primarily nocturnal.

19. Striped Skunks



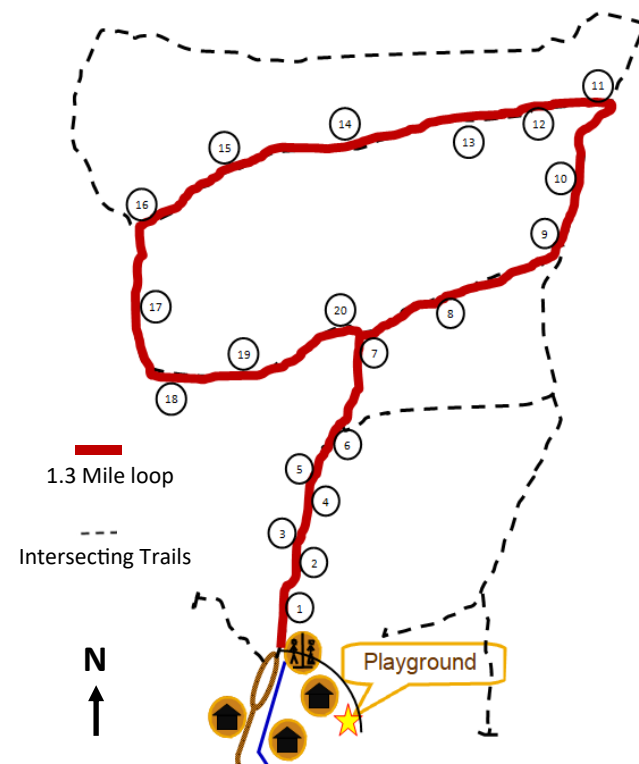
20. Ticks



Don't let ticks keep you from enjoying the outdoors. Instead, wear long sleeves and pants to keep ticks off your skin. You can even tuck your pants into your socks. Light colored clothes make ticks easier to spot. If you are bitten, grab the tick by its mouthparts with tweezers and pull away from your skin. Clean and disinfect the site of the bite. If the tick is not swollen, it has likely not been attached for long enough to transmit Lyme disease. Watch for Lyme disease symptoms like fever, rash, inflammation or joint pain.

Moorehead Park North Loop Trail

Spring Edition



1.3 Mile loop

Intersecting Trails

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↑

Playground

Remember, as you walk through this public park that it belongs not only to you but to all of us. Treat it just as you would want someone to treat your backyard. Please respect the park's amenities, trails, resources, and plant and animal life. Thank you for not littering, trampling the plants, or disturbing the wildlife.

Maintaining a bluebird box is an excellent way to recover lost nesting habitat. Be sure to place the box high and in open habitat to deter house wrens. Wrens cause problems for bluebirds because the males build “dummy nests” in multiple places to give their mates options for nesting sites. This limits the availability of nesting cavities for bluebirds.

1. Bluebird Boxes



2. Galls



Stem galls are caused by insects that lay their eggs on the plants. The larva from the hatched egg then eats its way into the stem. The plant responds by enveloping the larva in a woody protective sheathing that is also the larva’s food source. The insect overwinters in the gall and emerges in the spring as an adult.

For the male woodcock, the early bird gets the worm, and the hen. The first *peent* can be heard when there’s still snow on the grass in March. Sit still at dusk and listen for his nasal calls and watch as he spirals upward to heights of 200 feet, wings twittering, then zigzags back down to start his display over again.

3. Woodcocks



Owls swallow their prey whole, or in large pieces, but cannot digest fur, feathers, or bones. The indigestible material is compacted into a pellet and spit out by the owl, kind of like a hair ball. Owls spit out about one pellet per day, often from the same roosting spot. If you find an owl pellet on the ground, keep your eyes and ears open for the owl that left it!

4. Owl Pellets



Prairie fires convert nutrients from a form that takes months or years to decay, to a form that is instantly usable to plants. The newly blackened ground also absorbs the sun’s warmth, stimulating dormant plants to grow. In the absence of fire, Cedars invade the prairie and displace animals such as Prairie Chickens.

5. Eastern Red Cedar Trees



6. Deer Rubs



Bucks rub their antlers on trees for two reasons: to mark their territory, and to remove antler velvet. Bucks grow new antlers every summer and remove their velvet in the fall, when their antlers stop growing. They prefer to rub trees with a diameter of 1/2 - 4 inches, which can kill trees of that size. Guards or fencing can protect trees, especially favored trees like white pines.

7. Boreal Chorus Frog



The repeated crrreek of a chorus frog call is a sure sign of spring. This little guy’s call sounds like running a finger down the teeth of a comb. They are common throughout the state and live in a variety of wet habitats including wet prairies, streams, and lakes.

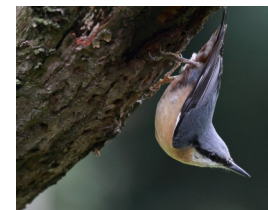
8. Silver Maple Tree



The budding of maple trees is one of the first signs of spring. Their flowers are an essential food source for pollinators early in the year.

Nuthatches are unique in that they are the only songbird known to move down a tree head-first. If you see this, it is probably searching for insects to eat or storing seeds for later. Keep your ears open for their repeated “yank-yank-yank” call which is described as a nasal laughing sound.

9. White Breasted Nuthatch



10. Garlic Mustard



Garlic Mustard, is an invasive plant that out-competes the diverse native plants of our forest under-story. It can produce thousands of seeds and is ignored by grazing animals! It tastes like garlic and can be easily identified by its garlic-like smell when the leaves are crushed.

Ida County has a high population of black squirrels, yet “black squirrel” is not a species. They are actually fox squirrels with a genetic mutation in their melanin pigmentation, AKA melanistic. It is the opposite of albino, which means the absence of melanin.

11. Black Squirrels



12. Spring Ephemeral Flowers

The forest floor comes to life as spring ephemeral flowers bloom. The name ephemeral, meaning short lived, is very fitting. They are in a race to soak up sunlight before the tree canopy shades them out.



Trout Lily

Bloodroot

Dutchman’s Breeches