




Sources:

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What is the benefit of wetland restoration?

Wetlands are also important landscape features because they hold and slowly release flood water and snow melt, recharge groundwater, act as filters to cleanse water of impurities, recycle nutrients, and provide recreation and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Wetlands have been quickly disappearing in Illinois from the impacts of development projects which threaten their economic and ecological value. Less than 10% of wetlands remain in Illinois that were once here providing for natural resource balance.

Ecosystem services can be defined as those economic benefits that can be derived from the existence of a natural resource. The resources wetlands provide can save cities thousands of dollars per year.

By re-establishing native species and protecting this area we are benefitting ourselves by:

- Increasing pollution reduction capacity for human health
- Reducing flood damage to homes and businesses
- Sequestering more carbon dioxide to help mitigate climate change
- Creating space for education and environmental protection
- Preserve features that provide cleaner air and water sources to human populations

Why did the native plants leave in the first place?

European Buckthorn is an invasive species of large shrub causing widespread habitat loss for native plants by over-shading and outcompeting native species.

It has become very common in residential Illinois and is recognizable through its orange inner bark, dark green oval leaves that have upward curving veins, and black berries/seeds that spread the population.

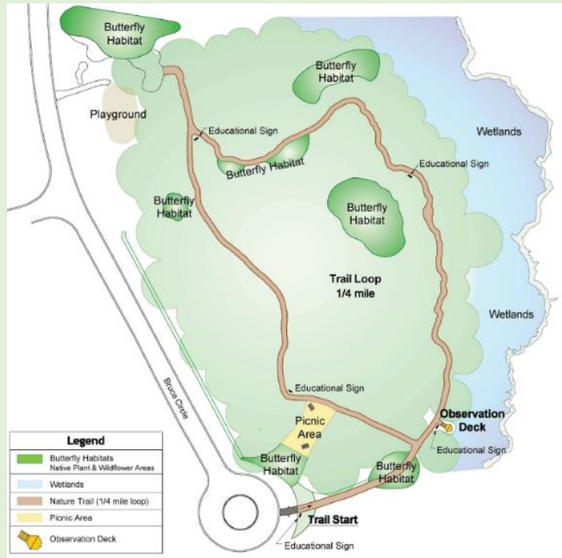
By clearing this area and controlling areas infested by Buckthorn, communities have a chance to re-establish and support more biodiverse plant and animal species.

With the return of native plants comes the return of other species that depend on them for survival. One example is the Monarch Butterfly, which uses Brierwoods Preserve as a waystation on its annual migration route.

Native Plant Tour

Brierwoods Preserve
Self-Guided Tour

28 Bruce Circle North
Hawthorn Woods, IL 60047



STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

IN THE VILLAGE OF HAWTHORN WOODS

WELCOME TO BRIERWOODS PRESERVE NATIVE PLANT TOUR

In 2017 the Brierwoods Nature Preserve opened to the public for the first time since the First Nations People occupied this land. Thanks to our continuing stewardship volunteers, this parcel of land is being revitalized as a haven for local plant and animal species.

On this walk, try to tune in to the sights, sounds, and smells of this special place as you experience the many health benefits of "a walk in the woods."

WOODLAND PLANTS

1. WILD GERANIUM (GERANIUM MACULATUM)

This common garden plant blooms from April to June and has been used as an herbal medicine for toothaches or painful nerves.

2. WOODLAND PHLOX (PHLOX DIVARICATA)

Pastel colors and a nice scent make these flowers a lovely treat to butterflies or other creatures with long enough tongues to reach its nectar.

3. WILD COLOMBINE (AQUILEGIA CANADENSIS)

With fern-like leaves and long red flowers this plant is a nectar source for Bumblebees and the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird.

4. COMMON MILKWEED (ASCLEPIAS SYRIACA)

A tall plant that has white latex flow through all of its parts, it is used in many pollinator gardens as a waystation for monarch butterfly life cycles.

5. PRAIRIE MILKWEED (ASCLEPIAS SULLIVANTII)

This variety of milkweed is less aggressive than Common Milkweed. Its presence indicates a moderate to highly healthy prairie.

6. BUTTERFLY MILKWEED (ASCLEPIAS TUBEROSA)

The only milkweed with orange flowers in Illinois. This plant does not have the milky latex of other species.

7. BLACK-EYED SUSAN (RUDBECKIA HIRTA)

This plant doesn't need much to shoot up and grow out its yellow face. It moves in to disturbed areas and fire-touched lands quickly.

8. CREAM WILD INDIGO (BAPTISIA BRACTEATA)

This fire-friendly plant gets its name from the creamy yellow color of its slow-growing flowers.

9. PURPLE CONEFLOWER (ECHINACEA PURPUREA)

A popular prairie restoration flower, it is found more commonly in the Chicago region for a splash of summer color.

WETLAND PLANTS

1. COMMON RUSH (JUNCUS EFFUSUS)

The soft rush is a great plant for re-establishing native communities for its ability to handle polluted conditions and shoreline protection.

2. TORREY'S RUSH (JUNCUS TORREYI)

Flowerheads look like bristles for this rush. They can spread aggressively in disturbed wetlands where there is little competition.

3. DARK GREEN BULRUSH (SCIRPUS ATROVIRENS)

Cool season sedges like these have the ability to grow when the ground is colder in spring and fall. It is an important food for wetland animals.

4. PRAIRIE BLAZING STAR (LIATRIS PYCNOSTACHYA)

Purple blazing flowers it might have, but this flower has no floral scent in its usually higher-quality moist meadow home.

5. CARDINAL FLOWER (LOBELIA CARDINALIS)

Plants with red flowers like these typically attract hummingbirds. Sometimes they also attract Swallowtail butterflies because their compound eye can detect the color red.

6. ROSE MILKWEED (ASCLEPIAS INCARNATA)

Also called Swamp Milkweed, this plant is very popular with insects and can tolerate moderate flooding quite well.

7. CHAIRMAKERS RUSH (TRIANGULAR STEM) (SCHOENOPLECTUS PUNGENS)

Named because its stems were used in the construction of seats for wooden chairs, the stems of this sedge grow sharply 3-angled.

TREES

1. BLACK WALNUT (JUGLANS NIGRA)

Versatility is this tree's middle name. Good for woodworking, walnut cultivation, and being a pioneer species, this species sticks to floodplains and riparian zones.

2. WHITE OAK (QUERCUS ALBA)

Massive canopies emerge from these long-lasting trees which are staples of our native woodlands. Rounded lobed leaves turn red in autumn.

3. SHAGBARK HICKORY (CARYA OVATA)

The easiest way to ID this tree is to read the name. The bark looks like it is peeling right off the tree. Please do not peel this bark off as it exposes the tree to burrowing insects and water damage.

4. NORTHERN RED OAK (QUERCUS RUBRA)

This stately species is among the largest oak trees and requires plenty of room. Its leaves are distinguishable by being less deeply lobed than other oaks.

5. NORTHERN CATALPA (CATALPA SPECIOSE)

For two weeks in the spring trumpet shaped white flowers will bloom on this tree and then give way to large seed pods, 10"-18" long. These pods and seeds have demonstrated to have diuretic properties.