

Sleeping Bear Dunes

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sleeping Bear Dunes
National Lakeshore



South Manitou Island



South Manitou Island is part of an island chain that extends north to the Straits of Mackinac. The island consists of a ridge of tilted layers of limestone, buried under a blanket of glacial debris. Glaciers carved out the Lake Michigan basin. When the basin filled with water, the peaks of the ridge remained exposed as islands. During post-glacial times, winds blowing on the high, sandy bluffs on the west side of the island moved sand inland, forming perched dunes. The dunes are a fragile environment. Please stay on existing paths and avoid stepping on plants.

Traveling to the Islands

Manitou Island Transit is the authorized park concessionaire providing passenger ferry service to North and South Manitou Islands. **Reservations are recommended.** Passengers must check in at the ticket office at the Fishtown Dock in Leland one hour prior to departure. Ferry schedules vary depending on time of year; check with Manitou Island Transit for current schedule. Departure times can vary due to weather conditions. Passengers must pack all personal equipment securely to prevent damage from cargo shifts and top loads. For schedules and information contact: Manitou Island Transit, P.O. Box 1157, Leland, MI 49654; 231-256-9061; www.manitoutransit.com.

Recreation Use Fees

Entrance fee for the mainland and Manitou Islands:

Park Pass (per vehicle / valid for 7 days)	\$10.00
Annual Park Pass (valid for one year from month of purchase)	\$20.00

South Manitou Island camping fees:

Backcountry Permit (up to 4 people and 2 tents / per night)	\$ 5.00
Group Camping (9 to 20 people and up to 10 tents / per night)	\$23.00

Planning Your Visit

The following suggestions are offered to help you have a safe and enjoyable visit. The boat trip can be cool even in summer, so bring a jacket and rain gear. Wear comfortable hiking boots. Mosquitoes and black flies are common in summer. Poison ivy is abundant. There is no food service or store on the island. Be sure to return to the dock in time for departure.

Pets

Pets are prohibited on the island due to disturbance to visitors and wildlife.

Exotic Species Prevention

In order to prevent unwanted plant introductions to the islands, mats are provided on the island and Leland docks to scrape off any hitchhiking dirt and seed sources from your footwear. Please inspect **all** of your equipment for possible plant hitchhikers, such as seeds or burrs, which may be attached to clothing, boot laces or camping equipment, and remove them **before** coming to the islands.

Island Tour

Manitou Island Transit offers guided tours in open-air vehicles with stops at the old schoolhouse, farmsteads, and cemetery. Some tours focus on natural history and there is an opportunity to customize tours for special interests. Tours take approximately 1.5 to 2 hours.

Ranger Station

The ranger station is in the former United States Life Saving Service Station in the village. Rangers are here to help you enjoy your visit and protect the island resources.

Report all emergencies and requests for assistance to the rangers. In an emergency, the ranger station can be reached by calling (231) 334-3976.

Camping

Camping is permitted at only three locations: Bay, Weather Station, and Popple Campgrounds. Low-impact camping is the rule. This minimizes human impact on the fragile natural resources. There is no transportation for camp gear, so you must pack it in. Food should be stored in hard containers or hung from a line to thwart chipmunks. **On the day of your departure from the island, please be at the dock with your gear by 11:00 a.m.** Various factors may require the ferry's departure immediately after arrival.

Individual campsites: Individual sites are limited to 4 persons and 2 tents. Campers must purchase a Backcountry Use Permit before camping. The fee is \$5.00 per night per permit. Permits are available at the Fishtown dock in Leland during the summer months. During the off-season, please contact the visitor center in Empire for permits. Upon arriving at the island, a park ranger will meet you at the dock to

complete camper registration and to help you plan your visit.

Group Campsites: There are six larger group campsites, each designed to hold up to 20 campers and 10 tents. Group sites are available by reservation only. Reservations can be made via the internet at <http://www.recreation.gov> or by calling the reservation center at 1-877-444-6777. The center is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. eastern time. For information about making a reservation, call the park at 231-326-4700. The cost for a group campsite is \$23.00 per night. Please note: The fee for group camping does not include transportation to the island. Please contact Manitou Island Transit to make your ferry reservations.

Fishing

Only artificial lures are allowed in Florence Lake. A State of Michigan fishing license is required. Boats without motors are permitted on the lake. However, wheeled vehicles may **not** be used to transport boats to the lake. Any watercraft brought to the island to be used in Florence Lake must be decontaminated, at no charge, by the rangers to prevent the introduction of zebra mussels and other non-native species. This includes float tubes, kayaks, rafts, waders, etc.

Water

Water is available at the village and Bay Campground. There is no water source at Weather Station or Popple Campgrounds. Do not use pump areas for bathing or dishwashing. Do not use soap in any lake.

Hiking

For safety, hike with a companion, and notify someone of your route and expected return time. Wear hiking boots that give good support. The terrain varies from sandy beaches to gravel and boulder-surfaced slopes. Carry drinking water. Please stay on designated trails to avoid causing erosion and damage to plants. This is especially important in sensitive areas such as the gull rookery, old growth cedars, dunes, and steep bluffs. **CAUTION: Hiking on steep bluffs is dangerous. Decaying buildings are dangerous. Enter only buildings designated for public use. Respect the rights of private property owners at all times.**

Boating

Docking is limited to 30 minutes at the South Manitou Island dock. There are no fuel services available. Set your anchor with wind shifts in mind. Squalls and passing weather fronts can create damaging wave conditions.

Fires

Fires are permitted only in the campground community fire rings. Dead and down wood may be used. Cutting any standing vegetation, dead or alive, is prohibited. Beach fires are prohibited. Fires are prohibited at Popple Campground.

Lighthouse and Coast Guard Station

The 100-foot lighthouse tower, active from 1871 to 1958, marked the location on the only natural harbor between here and Chicago. Ships took refuge here during storms and steamers stopped at the island to refuel with wood for their boilers.

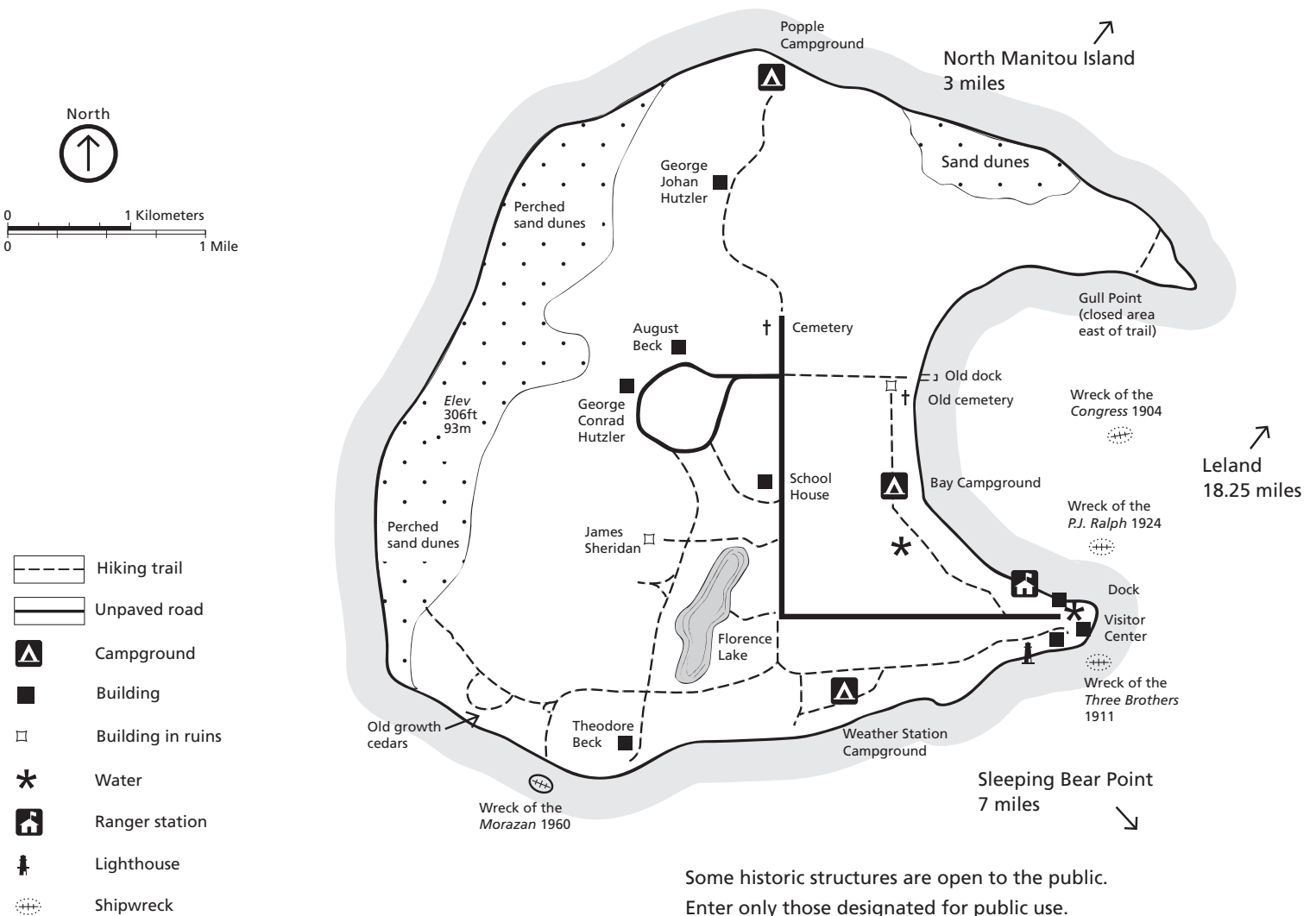
In 1901, the U.S. Life Saving Service built a station on the island to assist ships in distress. The life-savers could row out in their surfboat or use a line-throwing Lyle Gun and breeches buoy to rescue stranded sailors. A wreck from this era, the *Three Brothers* (1911), is offshore of Sandy Point between the dock and the lighthouse. In 1915 the U.S. Life Saving Service became part of the U.S. Coast Guard. After World War II, modern equipment ushered in a new era in life-saving. This was demonstrated on the cold, stormy night of November 29, 1960 when the Liberian freighter, *Francisco Morazan* ran aground on the southwest shore of the island. Three Coast Guard cutters and a helicopter rescued the fifteen people on board. The battered wreck is still visible today. As a mark of the changing times, the station was permanently closed in 1958.

Hiking around South Manitou Island

The island is small and its ecosystem extremely fragile. Your visit is one of thousands each year. Make your impact small and your enjoyment large.

ROUND TRIP distances for suggested hikes, starting at the ranger station:

Lighthouse	0.6 miles	School House	3.0 miles
Gull Point	4.6 miles	Weather Station Campground	2.7 miles
Old growth cedars and shipwreck	6.9 miles	Popple Campground	7.4 miles
West side sand dunes	7.4 miles	Bay Campground	1.0 miles
Cemetery via road	4.6 miles	Around island via shoreline	10.0 miles
Old Cemetery via beach	2.0 miles		



Some historic structures are open to the public. Enter only those designated for public use.