

National Park Service

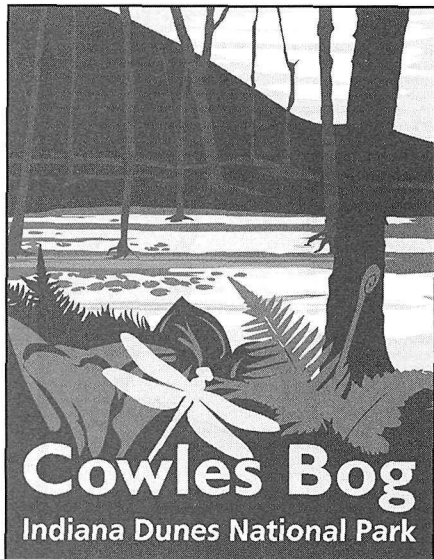
U.S. Department of the Interior

Indiana Dunes National Park



Trail Map

*Experience your
America™*



*Hike over fifty miles
of trails at
Indiana Dunes
National Park*



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Visit: www.nps.gov/indu
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Cowles Bog Trail

Cowles Bog is an area of such outstanding plant diversity that it was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1965. Explore several distinct habitats including ponds, marshes, and black oak savannas. Enjoy stunning views and a secluded Lake Michigan beach.

This is a classic hike of the Indiana Dunes. Park in the north parking lot, hike out the gravel road, and pick up the trail on the west side of Mineral Springs Road. The trail runs along the edge of a wetland with abundant plants and wildlife. After half a mile, pause on the boardwalk and notice the fiddlehead ferns that thrive in the wetland. Look at how ferns unroll as they grow. Follow the trail until loop trail junction.

The preferred direction around the loop is counter-clockwise. Take the trail to the right and notice the habitat change to a rare black oak savanna. The trail winds around beautiful interdunal ponds filled with aquatic life.

At roughly the 1.5-mile mark, stay to the right at the cut-off trail junction. As you near Lake Michigan, climb up the steep dune and take in the sweeping views of Lake Michigan and the secluded beach. On the way out to the water, stop and revel in the sea of marram grass that blankets the sand. Pack a lunch, get your feet in the water, and stay awhile.

For the return trip, hike a quarter mile left (west) on the beach and look for the trail that heads back up through the marram grass, over the dune, and into the oak savanna. Stay right at the cut-off trail junction and left at the Greenbelt trail junction. The trail will leave the savanna and head through the large wetland complex. Continue through the wetlands until the original trail junction. Turn right and take the trail back out to the north parking lot.

Steep sand dunes near Lake Michigan can make this a strenuous hike. The trail starts in shade but ends in the full sun. Please bring plenty of water, sun protection, and dress in layers. Please pack out all trash. The weather on the beach can be dramatically colder or hotter than in the woods.

Tips for the Trail

- Hike Length – 4.7 miles, 202 feet of elevation gain, 15% maximum grade.
- Hike Time – 4 hours.
- Difficulty – Moderate to rugged with steep dune climbs in loose sand.
- Trail Surface – Mixture of loose sand and packed dirt.
- Hours – Open daily 6 am to 11 pm.
- Free – No entrance or parking fee.
- Facilities – Year-round porta potty.
- No potable water.
- Pets – Permitted on a leash (6' or shorter).
- Prohibited – Littering, hunting, or removing plants.
- Prohibited – Bicycles and motorized vehicles.
- Ticks are present year-round. Take precautionary measures to prevent bites.
- Poison ivy can be present on the edges of the trail.
- Be prepared for changing weather conditions.
- Please stay on the trail and respect closed area signs. Going off trail damages fragile habitat. Stay off the marram grass.
- Glass is not allowed on the beach.
- Accessibility – Trails are not wheelchair accessible.
- GPS: 41.645191, -87.084633 (Decimal Degrees).

In case of an emergency or to report a crime, call 1-800-PARK-TIP.

Cowles Bog Trail

LAKE MICHIGAN

Town of
DUNE ACRES
(PRIVATE PROPERTY)

Cowles Bog Trailhead



Steep climb
0.2 mi.
0.5 mi.
0.5 mi.
0.3 mi.
0.6 mi.

0.8 mi.

INDIANA DUNES
NATIONAL PARK

Mineral Springs Road

Greenbelt Trailhead



Calumet Bike Trail

Porter Brickyard
Bike Trail

1.0 mi.

0.3 mi.

0.6 mi.

ELECTRIC & GAS COMPANY PROPERTY

North



Cowles Bog Total Trail Distance = 4.7 miles
Greenbelt Total Trail Distance = 4.9 miles

Parking	Trailhead	Cross-Country Skiing	Biking	Wetlands	Open Water
Trail	Mileage	Boardwalk	Bike Trail	Train Tracks	Bridge

In case of emergency or to report a crime, call 1-800-PARK-TIP. Secure valuables out of sight.