



# The Singing Sands

Summer 2012 - Vol. 33 No. 1

## Mission of the National Park Service

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

## Mission of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

Preserve, restore, and protect the outstanding ecological and biological diversity along with the geological features that characterize the southern shore of Lake Michigan. Provide access for a large diverse population to experience natural, scenic open spaces and recreational, scientific, historical features, and inspirational, and educational opportunities.

## Contact Information

ADDRESS  
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore  
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Porter, IN 46304  
(GPS - N41.6336 W87.0544)

PHONE  
219-926-7561 visitor information

E-MAIL  
indu\_communications@nps.gov

WEBSITE  
www.nps.gov/indu

TWITTER  
<http://twitter.com/indianadunesnl>

1-800-PARKTIP (727-5847)  
To report emergencies, criminal activities, or suspicious activity.

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## A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement

by Costa Dillon, Superintendent



Volunteers help build and repair trails.

2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service—a defining moment that offers an opportunity to celebrate our shared American heritage as we prepare for a new century of stewardship and engagement.

Through the support of the American people, partners, volunteers and employees, the National Park Service’s *A Call to Action* plan is having a profound effect on the lives of our citizens. We hope to expand those impacts, even in these times of fiscal constraint, by strategically focusing our efforts on aligning our existing resources on powerful actions that advance our mission. The plan, found at [www.nps.gov/calltoaction](http://www.nps.gov/calltoaction), is organized around four broad themes: Connecting People to Parks, Advancing the NPS Education Mission, Preserving America’s Special Places, and Enhancing Professional and Organizational Excellence.

This plan is not standard bureaucratic jargon; it has real meaning for those who visit or live near Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. We want to assure that this national park remains relevant and valued by citizens as a source of discovery, economic vitality, renewed spirit, and deepened understanding of our individual and national identity.

This fall, we’re launching the “Nature in My Neighborhood” outdoor play area for kids to explore nature on nature’s terms. The new Porter Brickyard Trail opens new pathways for walking and bicycling into the park from nearby communities. We are working to expand the Park Prescriptions program to more health care providers who will direct patients to use the national park for health and wellness exercise.

The 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016 is also the 50th anniversary of the creation of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, the 100th anniversary of Indiana’s state parks, and the 200th anniversary of Indiana’s statehood. This marks an extraordinary opportunity to set regional goals where we can work together to strengthen and expand the opportunities that parks and land conservation offer to our quality of life. We welcome your ideas and participation in how to make 2016 a year to remember. If you would like to volunteer to be a part of the celebration, or have ideas on how to mark this occasion, let us know.

## Park Information

Unless otherwise posted, the public areas of the park are open from sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. Most parking areas are open from 7:00 a.m. until 30 minutes after sunset. Lake View parking area remains open until 11:00 p.m.



### Indiana Dunes Visitor Center

Located on SR 49, between U.S. Hwy. 20 and Interstate 94 near Chesterton, Indiana. Open daily 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. in the summer and 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. in the winter. An introductory park movie is available upon request.

GPS: N41.6336 W87.0544



### Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education

Located on 100 N. Lake St. Miller, 46403, Indiana. Open daily 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Memorial Day through Labor Day.

GPS: N41.6061 W87.2678



# Ranger Guided Programs

	Program	Description	Date & Time	Location
<b>Daily</b>	<b>Beachcomber Junior Explorer</b>	Kids can enjoy the beach and learn about the national park by completing the Beachcomber Junior Explorer sheet and earn a reward. Free activity pages available at the Visitor Center, Douglas Center, or from a ranger.	Peak Beach Hours weather and season dependent	West Beach and Mount Baldy
<b>Weekends</b>	<b>Family Day at the Douglas Center</b>	Every weekend try a different hands-on family activity and explore Miller Woods with a ranger. Call the Douglas Center at 219-395-1821 for scheduled speakers and activities.	June - September 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 pm	Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Ranger's Choice Hike</b>	Explore the national lakeshore's exceptional diversity of life on a special ranger-led hike. Call or stop by the Visitor Center on Wednesday morning to find out the location of the week's hike.	June 13 - August 15 1:00 - 3:30 pm (no program July 4)	Indiana Dunes Visitor Center carpool to hike location
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Mount Baldy Sunset Hike</b>	Watch a sunset and stroll with a ranger at Mount Baldy. Learn what threatens this famous dune and what you can do to help protect it.	June 15 - August 24 June & July: 7:30 - 8:30 pm August : 7:00 - 8:00 pm	Mount Baldy
	<b>Bailly/Chellberg Open House</b>	Learn about centuries-old lifestyles of Duneland residents by exploring the Chellberg Farmhouse and Bailly Homestead.	June 15 - August 24 Chellberg House 10:00 am - noon and 2:30 - 4:30 pm Bailly Homestead 2:00 - 5:00 pm	Chellberg Farm and Bailly Homestead
	<b>Cemetery Hike</b>	Join a ranger for a hike to the historic Bailly Cemetery.	Cemetery Walk 1:00 - 2:00 pm	Chellberg Farm
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Campground Program</b>	Join a ranger around the campfire and learn about the incredible diversity of park resources and how fire plays an important part in keeping the park healthy.	June 16 - September 1 (no program June 30 & July 7) June: 8:30 - 9:30 pm July: 8:00 - 9:00 pm Aug.-Sept.: 7:30 - 8:30 pm	Dunewood Campground Amphitheater
	<b>Great Marsh Hike</b>	Join a ranger and explore the park's newest trail to look for birds and other wildlife while exploring the restored wetland.	July 14 - August 25 9:00 - 10:30 am	Great Marsh Trail
	<b>Duneland Heritage</b>	Join a ranger for a Chellberg Farm open house and see a traditional craft demonstration or farming presentation.	July 14 - August 25 1:00 - 4:00 pm	Chellberg Farm
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Kids Rule!</b>	Join a ranger in the Visitor Center activity room for stories and fun kid's activities. Participate in "Let's Move," stay fit and earn a sticker.	Sundays, Year-round 1:00 - 3:00 pm	Indiana Dunes Visitor Center
	<b>Pinhook Bog Open House</b>	Take an hour long self-guided hike into Indiana's only quaking bog. Rangers and volunteers stationed along the trail will help you understand this unique and fragile place.	Sundays June 17 - Aug 12 (no program July 1 & 8) 12:00 - 3:00 pm	Pinhook Bog parking lot

*Additional programs may be available. Ask a ranger or check [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu) for updates. Programs subject to change without notice.*

## Trip Planning



2hrs

### If you only have one – two hours:

- Explore the beach through the free Beachcomber Junior Explorer program. Ask a ranger or stop at the Visitor Center to pick one up.
- Stroll the Great Marsh Trail and possibly add birds to your life list. Over 270 species have been spotted at the national lakeshore, making this a birdwatcher's paradise.
- Stop by the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center or Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education and let the kids explore the activity room while you look over exhibits and view the park video.
- Join a park ranger on a daytime hike, a Douglas Center Open House or evening campground amphitheater program to discover more about this special place.
- Discover one of the park's most fragile and fascinating habitats at Pinhook Bog. Join a ranger on Sunday afternoons in the summer and see insect-eating plants and other bog plants growing on top of an ancient lake.

### If you have half a day:

- 
- Simply relax along the lakefront. Even on the busiest days you can find a quiet spot along the fifteen miles of beach.
  - Take a driving tour of some of the park's historic structures. Drive along Lakefront Drive and view the 1933 World's Fair Homes, then travel west and take a short walk on the trail back to the Bailly Homestead or Chellberg Farm.
  - Bring the family to the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education for free activities and visit the native animal room. Explore the pond and beautiful Miller Woods just outside the door.
  - Swim at the lifeguarded West Beach from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Enjoy your lunch at a picnic shelter and then hike the Dune Succession Trail to get a stunning view of Lake Michigan, and perhaps the Chicago skyline.



Day 1 2

### If you have one – two days:

- If you're an experienced paddler, see the dunes from Lake Michigan by kayaking the recently designated Lake Michigan Water Trail. Fifteen miles of the trail's 75 miles run along the park's shoreline.
- Enjoy a night at Dunewood Campground and experience the natural nightlife of the dunes. During the summer, join a ranger around the amphitheater's campfire for a Saturday evening program.
- Hike, bike, or even hoof it through the park. With 45 miles of hiking trails, you can spend days just exploring the park's diverse beauty on your own two feet. Bring a bike to explore even more of the park on quiet back roads or a new section of the Porter Brickyard Bike Trail (opening this summer.) If you have your own horse, ride the Ly-Co-Ki-We Trail and get a new perspective on the park.
- Spend a "day in the dunes." Hike the rugged five-mile long Cowles Bog Trail to explore wetlands, oak savannah, and high dunes. Pack in your lunch and enjoy it on a beach that is only accessible on foot or by boat.

# Special Programs and Events

Program	Description	Date & Time	Location
<b>Photography in the Dunes</b>	Join local photography experts and get tips on capturing elusive dunes images. Bring your digital camera for practice.	May 26 1:30 - 3:00 pm	Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education
<b>Music Heritage Series</b>	Enjoy the musical heritage of the dunes as local musicians share historic tunes using instruments like the hurdy-gurdy and dulcimer.	June 15, July 20, Aug 17, Sep 21 7:30 - 9:00 pm	Indiana Dunes Visitor Center
<b>Take a Kid Fishing Day</b>	Bring your own fishing gear and get fishing tips from a park ranger. All ages welcome. It's Free Fishing Day in Indiana, so a fishing license is not required.	June 2 9:00 am - noon	Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk
<b>Firefly Walk</b>	View the spectacular summer firefly show. Learn about firefly behavior and how climate change may affect park insects.	July 27 only 8:15 - 9:15 pm	Bailly/Chellberg parking lot
<b>Junior Wildland Firefighter</b>	Meet the park's fire crew and learn about their jobs and equipment. After this hands-on program, children will receive their very own Junior Wildland Firefighter activity book and patch.	May 12, June 23, July 28, Aug 25 June 9, July 7, Aug 4 10:00 - 11:00 am	Campground Amphitheater West Beach Contact Station
<b>Go Bog "Wild"</b>	Explore the floating Pinhook Bog boardwalk on your own during the open house or join a ranger-led hike of the new Upland Trail at either 9:00 a.m. or noon. Allow three hours to explore both trails.	June 9 & September 8 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	Pinhook Bog
<b>Perseid Meteor Shower</b>	Join a ranger for a spectacular evening light show courtesy of this annual meteor shower. There is a \$6 per car fee at West Beach.	August 10 8:00 - 10:00 pm	West Beach
<b>Bike Hike</b>	Join a ranger at Hobart Prairie Grove for a two-hour bike ride through beautiful woodlands, wetlands, and prairie. You must bring your own bike, and helmets are highly recommended.	August 25 1:00 - 3:00 pm	Hobart Prairie Grove
<b>Kayaking at Portage Lakefront</b>	Meet a ranger at Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk for a kayak tour of the Burns Waterway. You must bring your own kayak and life preserver.	September 22 10:00 am - noon	Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk
<b>Summer Solstice Celebration</b>	<b>Throughout the month of June, learn how area residents over time have celebrated and recognized the longest days of the year.</b>  <b>Planting Under the Honey Moon</b> Assist with planting the garden at Chellberg Farm and learn about regional beekeeping practices.  <b>Honey Moon Hike</b> Kick off our solstice month celebration with a full moon hike.  <b>Archeology Demonstration Open House</b> Learn about active studies conducted by National Park Service archeologists and professors/students from the University of Notre Dame. Children can earn a Junior Archeology Badge for their participation.  <b>Looking Back 10,000 Years: Archeology at Indiana Dunes</b> Archeologists have made some amazing discoveries about early peoples in the dunes, from hunting camps that are over 5,000 years old to shoreline shipwrecks. Guest speakers share their passion for the past.  <b>Solstice Traditions</b> How do solstice celebrations differ between cultures? Learn about traditions of the Swedish at Chellberg Farm, and the French and Native American at Bailly Homestead.	Sunday, June 3 1:00 - 4:00 pm  Sunday, June 3 8:00 - 9:30 pm  June 14, 16, 19, & 21 11:00 am - 4:00 pm  Thursday, June 14 7:00 - 8:30 pm  Saturday, June 23 1:00 - 4:00 pm	Chellberg Farm garden Bailly/Chellberg parking Lot Bailly Homestead Indiana Dunes Visitor Center Bailly/Chellberg parking lot <i>A free shuttle will be available to take visitors between the two sites.</i>

## Stewardship Days

<b>Plant an Heirloom Garden</b>	Get the Chellberg Farm garden off to a good start this spring. We'll be doing everything from pulling weeds to planting seeds.	May 19 9:00 am - noon	Chellberg Farm garden
<b>Remove Invasive Plants at Mount Baldy</b>	Help remove invasive species at the Mount Baldy area and improve your neighborhood national park during this volunteer opportunity.	June 16 9:00 am - noon	Mount Baldy parking lot
<b>National Lakeshore Service Day</b>	Lend a hand and help care for your local national park. Activities may include removing invasive species, planting native flowers, or other work depending on the conditions of the day. Wear comfortable clothes; work gloves and equipment will be provided.	July 21 9:00 am - noon	Park Headquarters 1100 N. Mineral Springs Road meet at the flagpole
<b>Bailly Cemetery Clean-up</b>	Spruce up the grounds of the historic Bailly Cemetery. Work gloves will be provided, but dress for the weather and bring bug repellent.	August 18 9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Bailly/Chellberg parking lot
<b>Improve Cowles Bog Wetland</b>	In honor of National Public Lands Day, help remove invasive species at Cowles Bog, a National Natural Landmark. Work gloves will be provided, but dress for the weather and bring bug repellent.	September 29 9:00 am - noon	Cowles Bog south parking lot



# West Beach Perspectives – Today and Tomorrow



West Beach current condition - dunes damaged by social trails.

Most summer visitors to West Beach focus on the lake and sun during their visit. You might say, they have a “ring-billed gull’s perspective” of the park, sticking close to the edge of the water and enjoying the company of other gulls. To broaden your understanding and enjoyment of the park, try looking at West Beach from a variety of perspectives.

If you take a stroll early in the morning before this very popular swimming spot becomes filled with sun seekers, you might notice that the sandy shoreline is clean and devoid of plants. Visit on two consecutive days, and you might notice that the beach is different than it was yesterday with driftwood or new patterns of sand. If you visit the beach regularly, you notice how dramatically it can change as the energy of the lake’s beating waves and relentless northwest winds shape and mold it. You are witnessing the dune building process in action.

Walk inland along the Dune Succession Trail and appreciate a deer’s perspective of the dunes. It’s a much more peaceful, stable landscape, protected from strong lakeshore winds and wave energy. Inland, the wind is not the culprit of change and instability, but our feet are!

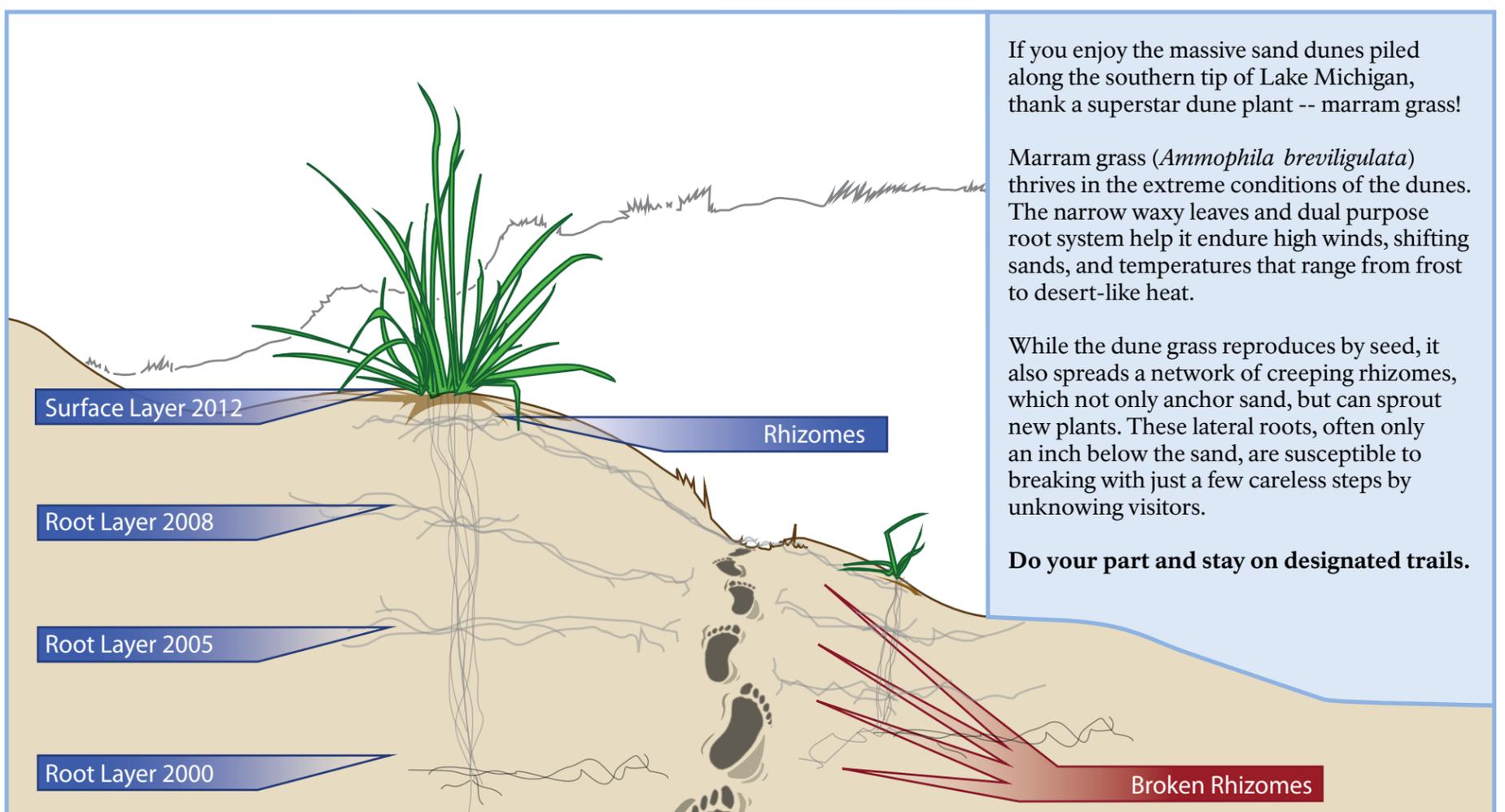
Look at the landscape from a red-tailed hawk’s sharp-eyed perspective in the air. You will see a web of lines dissecting the dunes and threatening their existence, as observed in the West Beach photo above.

When we take shortcuts or follow unmarked trails, it kills the marram grass, a crucial species for protecting the dunes from the wind. Without protective vegetation, these sandy areas grow wider as more people walk on them, putting the dunes in greater peril from the wind’s damaging force.

The photo above on the right shows how the dunes should look from a dune protector’s perspective. If we keep our feet on the right paths, we could see this kind of re-growth of grasses and plants needed to protect the dunes.

Try hiking in the dunes from the fox’s perspective--stick to the trail to conserve energy. Staying on officially marked trails provides many other rewards. The West Beach area has over 3.5 miles of trail with three connecting loops to enjoy. The Long Lake Trail loop trail takes you close to wetlands where water birds such as black-crowned night herons or blue-winged teals search for food in the shallow waters. Continue to the trail high point and in June, look for the sunny blooms of prickly pear cactus. Later in the summer, purple blazing star flowers stand as sentinels in the prairie-like grasslands.

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is well known for its plant diversity and for being home to many rare plants found only in this area. The federally endangered Pitcher’s thistle grows well in sandy areas like the



If you enjoy the massive sand dunes piled along the southern tip of Lake Michigan, thank a superstar dune plant -- marram grass!

Marram grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*) thrives in the extreme conditions of the dunes. The narrow waxy leaves and dual purpose root system help it endure high winds, shifting sands, and temperatures that range from frost to desert-like heat.

While the dune grass reproduces by seed, it also spreads a network of creeping rhizomes, which not only anchor sand, but can sprout new plants. These lateral roots, often only an inch below the sand, are susceptible to breaking with just a few careless steps by unknowing visitors.

**Do your part and stay on designated trails.**



**West Beach desired condition - naturally restored dune with no social trails.**

dunes, but it is easily damaged if walked on. Equally fragile are some of the plants that grow around the small ponds, known as pannes (pronounced pans), found between several of the dunes at West Beach. These include the Kalm's lobelia with its pale blue flowers and Baltic rush which grows in neat rows near the pond's edge.

When hiking the park's trails, consider a long term perspective that takes into account the enjoyment of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We need to thoughtfully choose our paths today to ensure that beautiful dunes, rare plants, and diverse wildlife can be seen by future generations.

Keep your feet in the right places and follow these simple steps:

- Stay on the paved pathway between the parking lot and the bath house.
- Hike only on official, marked trails. The three loops at West Beach are Dune Succession, Long Lake, and West Beach Trail.
- Don't kill the dune grass by walking on it.
- Bring an umbrella or beach tent for shade rather than setting up blankets under the trees to protect their roots.
- Talk to a ranger to learn more about protecting this fragile resource.
- Call our information line at 219-395-1882 if you have any questions about the park.

## Protect Your Park



**Walk only on designated trails** to prevent damage to park resources and minimize erosion.

**Dispose of your litter** and recycle items in marked containers.

**Leave all natural and cultural items** as you find them to preserve the present and past. Collecting items such as shells, fossils, rocks, and wildflowers is prohibited.

**Respect all wildlife** from a safe distance. Never feed wild animals. Feeding wild animals is dangerous, harms their health, and alters their natural behaviors.

**Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.** For example, don't bring firewood to the park. Exotic insect pests that live in firewood can kill native trees. Burn all firewood; take no firewood home.

## Mount Baldy Restoration Update



Last spring the park implemented the Mount Baldy Dune Protection Plan to slow and reverse damage to the dunes caused by the trampling feet of visitors over the years. While the Mount Baldy dune system is dynamic, naturally moving and shifting as a result of prevailing winds and weather processes, trampling has accelerated the movement at an alarming rate.

Temporary fencing was installed to protect dune plants and root systems that stabilize and slow down dune movement. Also, a public education campaign was launched to share how visitors can enjoy the dunes while protecting them by staying on designated trails. The restoration efforts show signs of success. Bob Daum, Chief of Resource Management, shared that the area within the fenced zone at the base of the dune has shown "substantial recovery and stabilization, especially of marram grass. Dozens of new trees have sprouted up near the dune crest and the marram grass we planted survived the winter."

Through visitors' continued cooperation, this part of Mount Baldy will be stabilized. Visitors should expect to see the plan continue throughout this year, and be expanded to other dune areas in the park suffering from heavy visitor use.

# Park Safety Tips

## Fast Facts About Lake Michigan:

### For Your Safety in the Park

Insect repellants work great to keep biting bugs away from you. Staying out of the woods during the very early morning or around dusk will also limit your exposure to mosquitoes. When you go exploring in the woods, you can keep ticks at bay by wearing long-sleeve shirts and pants, with cuffs closed and legs tucked into your socks.

Bees, yellow jackets, spiders, and snakes are happy to leave you alone if you do the same. No amount of repellent will keep creatures from fighting back when you stick your hand into their home. When exploring the park, don't put your hand anywhere you can't see.

### Danger

*People drown here each year. Be careful!*

If there are whitecaps on the lake, the water conditions are too dangerous for swimming or wading.

Sandbars, steep drop-offs, uneven bottom, and debris all combine to make footing uneven and sometimes dangerous.



### For Your Safety in Lake Michigan

Entering Lake Michigan is a lot different than splashing in your local pool: it's serious business! Wind driven waves can quickly create dangerous conditions that pose a severe threat to even the most expert of swimmers. People drown in the lake every year. Don't let your visit end in tragedy.

If there are whitecaps on the lake, the water conditions are too dangerous for swimming or wading anywhere along the 15-mile shoreline. Steep, uneven waves can knock you off your feet and tire you out before rescuers can help. Rip currents can sweep you away, even from shallow water.

Lake Michigan is a natural environment. Sandbars, steep drop-offs, uneven bottom and debris all combine to make footing uneven and sometimes dangerous. Sandbars entice poor or non-swimmers to venture far from shore. Waves sometimes knock the unwary off the sandbar into much deeper water, occasionally leading to tragedy. Children and poor swimmers are particularly vulnerable to the sandbars.

Lake Michigan, like all bodies of water, is susceptible to contamination by natural and human created bacteria. When concentrations are high, these bacteria can pose a threat to your health. Heed regional "No Swimming" advisories and enjoy the lake from the beach. Even on clear days, you should rinse off with fresh water after swimming.

- Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes are estimated to have been formed at the end of the last glacial period, about 10,000 years ago.
- It is the second largest Great Lake by volume with just under 1,180 cubic miles of water.
- Lake Michigan and Lake Huron are considered hydrologically inseparable. They are the same height and are joined by the wide Straits of Mackinac.
- Lake Michigan is the only Great Lake totally within US borders. All of its 1,638 miles of shoreline is bordered by the states of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. The drainage basin, approximately twice as large as the 22,300 square miles of surface water, includes portions of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin.
- It is approximately 118 miles wide and 307 miles long.
- It is the third largest Great Lake and sixth largest freshwater lake in the world by surface area.

## Summer Beach Parking

Parking Lots	Capacity	Directions from Indiana Dunes Visitor Center
West Beach	596 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 and proceed west to County Line Road. Turn north on County Line Road and follow signs. Lifeguards are on duty. Fees are charged from Memorial Day through Labor Day - \$6.00/car and \$30.00/bus.
Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk	125 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 west. Travel west to JCT 249 south, which is the first left after the the overpass. Turn left on Hwy. 249 south and stay in the right-hand lane to traffic light. Turn right at traffic light and follow the park signs.
Porter Access Point	66 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 west to Waverly Road, and turn north.
Kemil Road Access Point	81 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 east to Kemil Road (East State Park Road), and turn north.
Dunbar Access Point	26 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 east to Kemil Road (East State Park Road), and turn north. At the dead end, turn east to Dunbar.
Lake View	40 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 12 east to Kemil Road (East State Park Road), and turn north. At the dead end, turn east to Lakeview along this road.
Central Avenue Access Point	70 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 20 east to Hwy. 520 north. Follow to Indiana Hwy. 12 east to Central Avenue and turn north.
Mount Baldy	120 vehicles	Follow Indiana Hwy. 49 north to Hwy. 20 east to Hwy. 520 north. Follow to Indiana Hwy. 12 east to the Mt. Baldy access point.

### Parking Tips

- Parking along the road is not authorized.
- Smaller parking lots fill quickly during the summer months.
- The large parking lot at West Beach, with 600 spaces, rarely fills.
- You will be ticketed if you do not use a designated parking space.
- Always lock your vehicle, and leave valuables in your trunk, out of site, or at home.
- Some parking strategies may be to plan an early arrival, midweek trips, or visit during shoulder seasons.

# Top Visitor Questions

## Where is the beach?

The 15-mile beach can be accessed from many different locations. There are access points located north of the intersection of County Line Road and Highway 12 (Mount Baldy), north end of Central Avenue, Lake Front Drive at Lake View, intersection of West Lake Front Avenue and Dunbar Avenue, north end of East State Park Road, north end of Waverly Road (Porter), Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk (from Hwy. 12 take Hwy. 249 south and follow park signs), and north on North County Line Road (West Beach). West Beach has 600 parking spaces; other parking lots have limited parking. Please reference map located on page 8.

## Where may I climb a dune?

Mount Baldy is the only dune where climbing is allowed in the national lakeshore. You may scale the dune from the lakeside (north side) to the summit. Climbing is prohibited on the side adjacent to the parking lot because it accelerates the movement of the dune. Follow the trail from the parking lot, which leads around the side of the dune to a junction that offers a choice between the summit or beach trails.

West Beach offers a spectacular overlook on the one-mile Dune Succession Trail. **Please stay on designated trails to protect sensitive dune species.**

## Do you close the beach when high waves are present or E. coli levels are high?

No. The national lakeshore does not close its beach regardless of water conditions. Risks are inherent in all natural areas. During summer months, lifeguards are stationed at West Beach. Lifeguards are not present at other locations of the beach.

Call 219-926-7561 followed by prompt #2 for information regarding E. coli levels.

## May I launch my boat and fish?

The park does not have a boat launch. Personal motorized watercraft (Jet Skis and WaveRunners) are prohibited. However, you may launch your non-motorized canoe or kayak at locations other than at West Beach. An Indiana state fishing license is required to fish.

## How do I find out about beach regulations?

Just look for a sign like this on the beach. Different areas have different regulations.



## May I take my pet with me for a stroll or hike?

Yes. The national lakeshore has over 40 miles of hiking trails. Pets restrained by a leash are permitted on beaches east of the Kemil access point and on most park trails. However, pets are not permitted on the beach west of the state park. Pets are not permitted on the new Great Marsh Trail. The Ly-co-ki-we Trail (intersection of Hwy. 20 and School House Road) is open for horseback riding March 16 through December 14.

Please hike with others and stay on designated trails for your protection and that of park resources. Trail maps are available at the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, which is located near the intersection of U.S. Hwy. 20 and Indiana Hwy. 49 in Porter, IN.

## How do I reserve an environmental education program?

Teachers and youth group leaders should call Ranger Christy at 219-395-1885 to arrange for a free ranger-led program. Many of these programs are conducted at the park's Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education located in Gary/Miller, Indiana, and focus on the park's resource issues.



## Do you have a Junior Ranger Program?

Yes! Ask a ranger at the Visitor Center to help you select the free Junior Ranger or Junior Explorer program that best fits your visit. There are three Junior Ranger books to guide you on adventures through several park locations. We also offer the Beachcomber Junior Explorer program if you have just a short time at the beach; other Junior Explorer activities are offered at many special events. Once completed, each participant will have earned a badge, patch, sticker, or temporary tattoo. Pick up Junior Ranger and Junior Explorer materials at the Visitor Center, download them at [www.nps.gov/indu/forkids](http://www.nps.gov/indu/forkids), or just ask a ranger.

## Do you have a campground?

Yes. The Dunewood Campground is open the last Friday in April through the third Sunday in October and is located at the intersection of U.S. 12 and Broadway near Beverly Shores. Its 79 campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis for a fee of \$15.00 per night. **New registration system requires a credit or debit card ONLY. No cash or checks accepted.**

The restrooms are centrally located and have showers. Electrical hookups are not available; however, the campground has a dump station. Use firewood from local suppliers to help prevent the spread of invasive insects. Alcohol is strictly prohibited.

## How can I volunteer at the national lakeshore?

There are countless opportunities to volunteer. Go to [www.volunteer.gov/gov](http://www.volunteer.gov/gov) and click on Indiana. Our volunteer opportunities are listed there. If you do not have access to the internet, leave a message with Lynda, the Volunteers-In-Park program manager at 219-395-1682. We are looking for volunteers to provide information at visitor centers, restore natural landscapes, and help educate visitors.

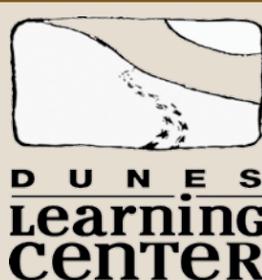
## Eastern National Bookstore



*Eastern National provides quality educational products and services to the visitors of America's national parks.*

Eastern National promotes understanding and support of the National Park Service by providing visitors with the information, materials, and experiences they need to fully understand and appreciate the importance of preserving and protecting America's national parks for future generations.

Eastern National, a nonprofit organization, donates a portion of its proceeds to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to support interpretive and educational activities and publications.  
[www.EasternNational.org](http://www.EasternNational.org)



Dunes Learning Center

700 Howe Rd

Chesterton, IN 46304

219-395-9555

[www.duneslearningcenter.org](http://www.duneslearningcenter.org)

## Partners



INDIANA LANDMARKS

Indiana Landmarks

340 West Michigan Street

Indianapolis, IN 46202

1-800-450-4534

[www.historiclandmarks.org](http://www.historiclandmarks.org)



Dunes National Park Association

P.O. Box 1130

Portage, IN 46368

### 1 West Beach

West Beach is a great destination, even when the weather is too cold for swimming. Grill a meal at the picnic shelter, walk a marked trail traversing the dunes and forest, learn how plant and animal communities are replacing one another through time, or watch migrating waterfowl at Long Lake in autumn and spring.

### 2 Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk

Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk has parking for 125 cars, an accessible fishing pier, a riverwalk along Burns Waterway, a rehabilitated breakwater, various hike/bike trails, access to the beach, and a 3,500 square foot pavilion that contains a food service area.

### 3 Cowles Bog Trail

The national lakeshore's most rugged hike takes you on a five-mile journey through wetlands and over both wooded and moving dunes to an isolated beach.

### 4 Bailly/Chellberg

Explore an 1820s fur trading outpost and a 1900-era farmstead. Enjoy Maple Sugar Time in March. Follow the trail that starts here and winds through a wide diversity of landscapes, including the Mnoke Prairie, Little Calumet River, and a mature beech/maple woodland.

### 5 Ly-co-ki-we Trail

Depending on the season, hike, ski, or ride the four-mile trail through wooded dunes and wetlands. Bring your own skis or horse.

### 6 Lake View

As the national lakeshore's only picnic area overlooking Lake Michigan, this site offers covered picnic shelters. Beautiful sunset views make this one of the more popular parking spots.

### 7 Dunewood Campground

Dunewood is one mile south of Lake Michigan and features 79 wooded campsites. Enjoy camping with the convenience of access to restrooms and showers. Fees are charged, and registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. New registration system requires a credit card or debit card only. No cash or checks accepted. The campground is open April 27 - October 21, 2012.

### 8 Mount Baldy

Hike the trail to the top of the national lakeshore's largest moving dune. Mount Baldy, at 126 feet tall, provides stunning views of Lake Michigan and its shoreline. Do your part to protect the park. Stay on designated trails and avoid walking on plants.

### 9 Pinhook Bog

A mat of sphagnum moss keeps everything from trees to insect-eating plants floating above an ancient, and now-hidden, lake. This extremely rare and fragile habitat can only be entered during ranger-led tours.

## Water Safety

Lake Michigan waters can be hazardous. Rip currents occur frequently during periods of high wind and waves. During the winter, shelf ice forms along the lakeshore and is never safe to walk on. Check with local authorities about conditions and potential hazards. Note: There are no lifeguards at any national lakeshore beaches during the fall, winter and spring.

