



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

Hiking Trails

Side 1: Map & General Information

Side 2: Trail Descriptions




General Trail Information



All of the trails described in this brochure are marked and maintained by the park. Each trailhead has a parking area and a map box containing detailed trail maps.

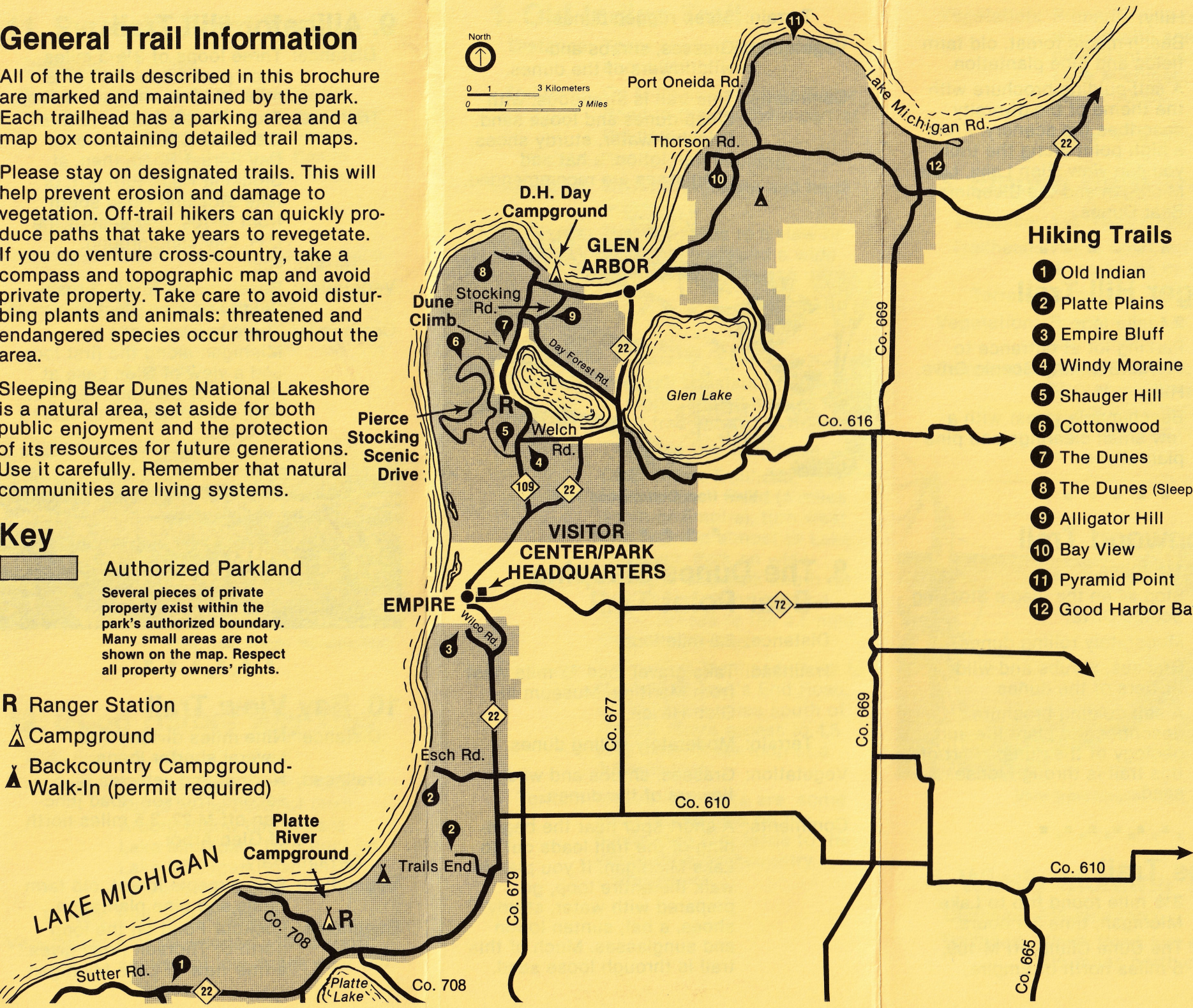
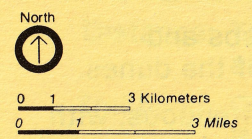
Please stay on designated trails. This will help prevent erosion and damage to vegetation. Off-trail hikers can quickly produce paths that take years to revegetate. If you do venture cross-country, take a compass and topographic map and avoid private property. Take care to avoid disturbing plants and animals: threatened and endangered species occur throughout the area.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is a natural area, set aside for both public enjoyment and the protection of its resources for future generations. Use it carefully. Remember that natural communities are living systems.

Key

 Authorized Parkland
 Several pieces of private property exist within the park's authorized boundary. Many small areas are not shown on the map. Respect all property owners' rights.

R Ranger Station
 Campground
 Backcountry Campground-Walk-In (permit required)



Hiking Trails

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1. Old Indian Trail

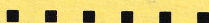
Distance: There are two loops, each about 2½ miles.

Trailhead: On M-22 just north of Sutter Road in the southern part of the park.

Terrain: Flat to gently rolling.

Vegetation: Mixed evergreens and hardwoods.

Comments: The trail leads to a view of Lake Michigan and a wide expanse of low beach dunes.



2. Platte Plains Trail

Distance: The trail consists of a series of loops, each 3-6 miles long. Total trail length: 13 miles.

Trailheads: There are two trailheads.

Otter Creek Trailhead: Take M-22 to Esch Road (4 miles south of Empire), turn west and proceed almost to Lake Michigan. Park on wide shoulder and walk south on unpaved road to trailhead. Gives access to the 4.5 mile Otter Creek loop.

Trail's End Trailhead: Drive to the end of Trail's End Road, off M-22, six miles south of Empire. Gives access to 4.5 mile Otter Creek loop or a 3.6-mile loop.

Terrain: Mostly flat; there are some short, steep hills on the 6-mile loop that leads to the White Pine Backcountry Campground.

Vegetation: Primarily pine-oak-aspen woods with some open fields, pine plantations and, near Lake Michigan, some low beach dunes.



3. Empire Bluff Trail

Distance: 1½ miles round trip.

Trailhead: Wilco Road, off M-22, 1.7 miles south of Empire.

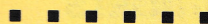
Terrain: Hilly.

Vegetation: Beech-maple forest, fields and dunes.

Comments: Leads to a scenic viewpoint high above Lake Michigan. A self-guiding brochure describes the scenery.



View from Empire Bluff Trail



4. Windy Moraine Trail

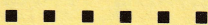
Distance: 1½-mile loop.

Trailhead: Welch Road, just east of M-109, 3½ miles north of Empire.

Terrain: Hilly.

Vegetation: Beech-maple forest, old farm fields and pine plantation.

Comments: A self-guiding brochure with the theme of bio-diversity describes the scenery. From a high point along the trail, you can view Glen Lake, Lake Michigan and the Sleeping Bear Dunes.



5. Shauger Hill Trail

Distance: 2.4-mile loop.

Trailhead: Parking lot at entrance to Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive.

Terrain: Hilly.

Vegetation: Beech-maple forest with a few small clearings and pine plantations.



6. Cottonwood Trail

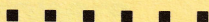
Distance: 1½ miles.

Trailhead: Stop #4 on the Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive.

Terrain: Moderately rolling dunes.

Vegetation: Grasses, shrubs and wildflowers of the dunes.

Comments: A self-guiding brochure describes the plant life and geology of the dunes. Part of this trail is through loose sand.



7. Dunes Trail

Distance: 3½ mile round trip to Lake Michigan, time 3-4 hours.

Trailhead: The Dune Climb off M-109, 5 miles north of Empire.

Terrain: Steep rugged dunes.

Vegetation: Grasses, shrubs and wildflowers of the dunes.

Comments: This trail is strenuous, with steep dunes and loose sand. Drinking water, sturdy shoes, suntan lotion, a hat and sunglasses are recommended.



View from Cottonwood Trail



8. The Dunes-Sleeping Bear Point Trail

Distance: 2.8-mile loop.

Trailhead: Take gravel road ¾ mile west from Maritime Museum in Glen Haven.

Terrain: Moderately rolling dunes.

Vegetation: Grasses, shrubs and wildflowers of the dunes.

Comments: A short spur near the beginning of the trail leads out to Lake Michigan. If you plan to walk the entire loop, go prepared with water, sturdy shoes, a hat, suntan lotion and sunglasses. Much of this trail is through loose sand.

9. Alligator Hill Trail

Distance: Three loops of 2½-3 miles each plus a spur trail of .8 mile, located off the first loop.

Trailhead: From M-109, 1 mile north of the Dune Climb, turn onto Day Forest Road, then, at Stocking Road turn left; or take Stocking Road south from M-109, just east of the D.H. Day campground.

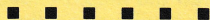
Terrain: Hilly.

Vegetation: Beech-maple forest, brushy fields and pine plantation.

Comments: There is a view of Lake Michigan along the first loop and a view of Glen Lake at the end of the spur trail, but both are somewhat obscured by trees.



View from Windy Moraine Trail



10. Bay View Trail

Distance: Nine miles divided into several shorter loops.

Trailhead: Northbound vehicles take second Thorson Road junction off M-22, 3.5 miles north of Glen Arbor.

Terrain: Hilly.

Vegetation: Beech-maple forest, old farm fields and pine plantation.

Comments: Lookout Point on the loop north of Thorson Road gives a fine view of Lake Michigan.

11. Pyramid Point Trail

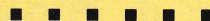
Distance: 2.7 miles.

Trailhead: Take M-22 to Port Oneida Road (3.7 miles north of Glen Arbor); follow Port Oneida Road till it ends at Basch Road. Follow Basch Road east to trailhead.

Terrain: Hilly.

Vegetation: Beech-maple forest and open fields.

Comments: Trail leads to a high, panoramic view of Lake Michigan half a mile from the trailhead.



12. Good Harbor Bay Trail

Distance: 2.8 miles.

Trailhead: Take M-22 to County Road 669 (8 miles north of Glen Arbor); follow 669 toward Lake Michigan. Turn right on Lake Michigan Road and follow it to trailhead.

Terrain: Flat, wet in places.

Vegetation: Mostly wooded with a short section of low dunes near the start.

Regulations

- ▶ Pets on trails must be kept on a 6-foot maximum, hand-held leash. Pets are not permitted at the Dune Climb.
- ▶ Collecting of plants and other natural, historical and archaeological items is not permitted. Exception: certain edible fruits and mushrooms may be collected in limited quantities for personal use.
- ▶ Bicycles are prohibited on hiking trails.

Safety

- ▶ Hike with a companion or notify someone of your route and expected return time.
- ▶ Carry drinking water.
- ▶ Avoid poison ivy.
- ▶ Dress for the weather.
- ▶ Be prepared for mosquitoes.
- ▶ Rifle season is November 15-30. Other hunting seasons span the period of September through May. Wear hunter orange.

In case of emergency, seek help at the nearest ranger station, campground office or visitor center.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Park Headquarters (616) 326-5134
Leelanau Co. Sheriff's Office . . (616) 941-4411
Benzie Co. Sheriff's Office . . (616) 882-4484

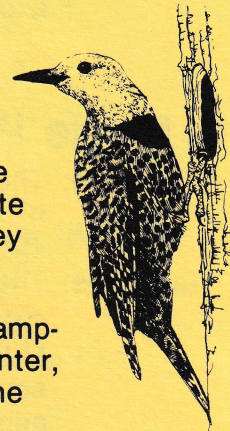


Poison Ivy.
Remember...
"Leaflets three,
let it be."

Backcountry Camping

Backcountry camping is permitted at the White Pine Campground along the Platte Plains Trail and at the Valley View Campground north of Glen Arbor. Campers can obtain a free backcountry camping permit at the Visitor Center, D.H. Day Campground or the District Ranger Stations.

North and South Manitou Islands, accessible by passenger ferry from Leland, provide extensive opportunities for hiking and backpacking. Separate brochures are available giving detailed information about the islands.



flicker



columbine

A variety of flowers, birds and mammals can be seen along park trails.