Celebrate 50 Years with 50 Ways to Play  

by Kim Swift

If you haven’t heard the news yet, let me be the first to tell you that Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore will turn 50 next year. No black balloons or tiptoeing around the fact for this 50th birthday! We plan to shout it far and wide that our national park will hit the half century mark in 2016. We will also be celebrating other important birthdays next year, including the Centennial anniversary of the National Park Service and the 200th birthday of the state of Indiana! Stay tuned for a year full of celebrations.

As part of the 50th anniversary of the park, we and our partners are sponsoring a variety of activities throughout the year, and we want to focus on how visitors play in our Indiana Dunes. Why focus on play, you may ask? Parents used to think of play time as something you send your kids to do so you can have a few hours to clean the house. Today, though, it is often an endangered activity that has to be scheduled by parents. Scientists are showing that children and adults need to “play” outdoors to connect with nature for our mental and physical health. Educators recognize that playing for young children is integral to their growth and development. Doctors are prescribing outdoor recreation to keep their patients fit and healthy.

The dunes are not too old for play either! This park provides a plethora of play opportunities with 15 miles of beach, 45 miles of trails and 15,000 acres of fun. How do you play in the park? Send us your suggestions, photos, and activities. We want to include them in a new publication we are creating, “50 Ways to Play at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.” The end product will likely be an online directory of ideas that others can use for planning their trips to the dunes. Please send your submissions to Kimberly_swift@nps.gov. We will accept them over the next 6 months.

Here are a couple ideas from my family to get you started. I have two teenagers, and I have to drag them away from their social and school activities. But when I asked them what their favorite dunes activities were, here is what they told me.

1. Camping: When summer arrives, we make time for camping. We pack up the dog and the car with our gear, and we hit the road. The Dunewood Campground at the national lakeshore is a great destination. The sites are well spaced. The bathrooms are clean, and the beach and trails are close by. You don’t have to make reservations because it is first-come, first-served. So we try to get there early on Friday to get a campsite. The nice thing is that all the campsites are great!

2. Kite Flying: Their next suggestion is kite flying at the beach. My son is an avid kite flyer and has lost a few kites during his 17 years! Lakeview is an excellent beach area for launching a kite with lots of open sky. The park will be hosting a kite making event on Saturday and Sunday, July 11 & 12 at the Douglas Center in conjunction with the Gary Air Show. Participants can make their own kites and then take them to Marquette Park for the Air Show that runs throughout the weekend.

3. Kayaking: This summer my kids want to learn how to kayak. We love water sports and kayaking will be our new challenge for this summer. Even though we don’t have our own kayaks, we plan to join park staff at the beach to learn how to paddle in Lake Michigan. Park staff will be roving some east end beaches with kayaks and other water toys this summer on the weekends. Contact the visitor center at 219-395-1882 to find out when and where they will be stationed and join them for some water play in the lake.

No matter what your favorite activity is—hiking, sking, swimming, or just relaxing on the beach, your neighborhood national park at Indiana Dunes is the place to play. Help us celebrate our 50th anniversary by sharing your favorite family activities as we develop our “50 Ways to Play in the Dunes.”
## Cowles Bog Wetland

- **Improving the National Public Lands Day:** 
  - **Bailly Cemetery Clean-up:** 
    - **July 18** at **9:00 am – 12:00 pm**
    - Bring your 2-5 year old child to join a ranger as we read fun nature books, and learn about nature.
  - **Planting an Heirloom Garden:** 
    - **June 20** at **9:00 am – 12:00 pm**
    - Help remove Oriental Bittersweet and other invasive species.
  - **National Public Lands Day: Improving the Cowles Bog Wetland:** 
    - **September 26** at **9:00 am – 12:00 pm**
    - Join the largest, hands-on volunteer effort to enhance America’s public lands by helping to restore one of our most threatened wetlands.

## Ranger Guided Programs

### Wednesday

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Beach Sunset Hike</td>
<td>June 3 – July 29: 7:30 pm–8:30 pm August 5 – 26: 7:00 pm–8:00 pm September 2: 6:30 pm–7:30 pm</td>
<td>Enjoy a Sunset Stroll with a ranger at the Central Beach area and learn about the threats faced by our dunes.</td>
<td>Central Beach Parking Lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Tots</td>
<td>The 2nd Wednesday of each month 10:00 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Bring your 2-5 year old child to join a ranger as we read fun nature books, and learn about nature.</td>
<td>Douglas Center for Environmental Education</td>
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### Thursday

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<tr>
<td>Learn to Kayak</td>
<td>June 18 – September 3 9:00 am – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Join a ranger on the beaches of Kemil and Dunbar Beach and learn how to use a kayak. Kayak and safety equipment will be provided.</td>
<td>Look for the ranger along the Kemil and Dunbar beach areas.</td>
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### Friday

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<tr>
<td>Music Heritage Series</td>
<td>May 15, June 19, July 17, Aug. 21, Sept. 18, Oct. 16, Nov. 20 &amp; Dec. 18 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm</td>
<td>Local musicians, Save the Tunes, share traditional music using instruments like the banjo, hurdy gurdy and dulcimer.</td>
<td>Indiana Dunes Visitor Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campground Program</td>
<td>May 22 – September 4</td>
<td>Join a ranger around the campfire and learn about the incredible diversity of park resources you can discover on the Dunes Scavenger Hunt.</td>
<td>Dunewood Campground Amphitheater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Baldy Guided Hike</td>
<td>June 5 – September 4 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm</td>
<td>While Mount Baldy remains closed to unrestricted public access, you can join a ranger for a special guided hike along a trail on the western edge of the dune that has been found to be free of holes. Reservations Required.</td>
<td>Meet at Visitor Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Friday Night Hike and Beach Campfire</td>
<td>June 5, July 3 &amp; August 7 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm</td>
<td>Enjoy the beach with a campfire. Relax with s’mores, stories and a sunset. You can hike a 2.5 mile trail (roundtrip) or meet the ranger at Lake Street Beach.</td>
<td>Meet at Douglas Center for Environmental Education or park at Lake Street Beach.</td>
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### Saturday

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<tr>
<td>Pinhook Bog Open House</td>
<td>May 23 – September 12 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Rangers and volunteers stationed along the trail will help you understand this unique place filled with carnivorous plants.</td>
<td>Pinhook Bog Parking Lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunset Stroll at Central Avenue Beach</td>
<td>June 6 &amp; July 18: 7:45 -8:45 pm, August 1: 7:30-8:30 pm, August 15: 7:15-8:15 pm, August 29: 7:00–8:00 pm</td>
<td>Enjoy a Sunset Stroll with a ranger at the Central Beach area and learn about the threats faced by our dunes.</td>
<td>Central Avenue Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunset Stroll at Portage Lakefront</td>
<td>May 30: 7:45-8:45 pm, June 27: 8:00-9:00 pm, July 25: 7:45-8:45 pm, Aug. 22: 7:15-8:15 pm, September 5: 6:30 – 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Join a ranger for a short, leisurely hike to enjoy the sunset at Portage Lakefront and Riverview.</td>
<td>Portage Lakefront and Riverview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campfire on the Beach</td>
<td>June 13: 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm July 11: 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm August 8: 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm</td>
<td>Watch a sunset on the beach and then join a ranger to toast marshmallows while enjoying stories and song.</td>
<td>Kemil Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Wildland Firefighter Program</td>
<td>May 16, June 13, August 8 &amp; September 12, 10:00 am - 11:00 am</td>
<td>Meet the park’s fire crew and hear about their jobs and firefighting equipment. Learn how they use fire as a tool to protect the park’s diversity. Children receive a Junior Wildland Firefighter activity book and patch.</td>
<td>Dunewood Campground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artful Landscapes of Miller Woods</td>
<td>June 13, July 18, August 15 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Create a drawing of Miller Woods in mixed media on paper and learn about the artists inspired by the dunes.</td>
<td>Douglas Center for Environmental Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship Days in Miller Woods</td>
<td>Every 4th Saturday of the month; 9:00 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Cut brush and remove invasive plants to help restore a very rare oak savanna habitat.</td>
<td>Douglas Center for Environmental Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting an Heirloom Garden</td>
<td>May 16 9:00 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Help get the farm garden off to a good start. We will be doing everything from pulling weeds to planting seeds</td>
<td>Chellberg Farm Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacking Invasives</td>
<td>June 20 9:00 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Help remove Oriental Bittersweet and other invasive species.</td>
<td>Meet at the Central Ave. Beach parking lot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bailly Cemetery Clean-up</td>
<td>July 18 9:00 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Join in to help wash the stone walls and spruce up the grounds of this historic cemetery.</td>
<td>Meet at the flagpole in front of Park Headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Public Lands Day: Improving the Cowles Bog Wetland</td>
<td>September 26 9:00 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Join the largest, hands-on volunteer effort to enhance America’s public lands by helping to restore one of our most threatened wetlands.</td>
<td>Meet at the Cowles Bog south parking lot</td>
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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.
Bike Ride with a Ranger

May 24 – September 6
9:00 am – 11:00 am
Take a bike ride with a ranger starting at the Campground and along the Calumet Bike Trail.

Miller Woods Hike

Every Sunday from May 24 - August 23
1:30 – 3 pm
Spectacular Miller Woods shares its secrets during this ranger-led hike.

Mount Baldy Guided Hike

June 7 & 21, July 5 & 19, August 2, 16 & 30 and September 6
10:00 am – 11:30 am
While Mount Baldy remains closed to unrestricted public access, you can join a ranger for a special guided hike along a trail on the western edge of the dune that has been found to be free of holes. Reservations Required.

Bailly Homestead and Chellberg Farm Open House

May 24 – September 6
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Tour the Chellberg Farmhouse and Bailly Homestead to learn about the lives of early Duneland farm families.

Special Programs & Events

Program Date & Time Description Location

Bike Ride with a Ranger May 24 – September 6 9:00 am – 11:00 am Take a bike ride with a ranger starting at the Campground and along the Calumet Bike Trail. Dunewood Campground

Miller Woods Hike Every Sunday from May 24 - August 23 1:30 – 3 pm Spectacular Miller Woods shares its secrets during this ranger-led hike. Douglas Center for Environmental Education

Mount Baldy Guided Hike June 7 & 21, July 5 & 19, August 2, 16 & 30 and September 6 10:00 am – 11:30 am While Mount Baldy remains closed to unrestricted public access, you can join a ranger for a special guided hike along a trail on the western edge of the dune that has been found to be free of holes. Reservations Required. Meet at the Visitor Center and caravan to the dune

Bailly Homestead and Chellberg Farm Open House May 24 – September 6 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm Tour the Chellberg Farmhouse and Bailly Homestead to learn about the lives of early Duneland farm families. Chellberg Farm and Bailly Homestead

Program Date & Time Description Location

Flower Hike May 2 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Join a ranger for a hike on the Bailly/Chellberg Trail to see what spring woodland flowers are blooming. Bailly/Chellberg Parking Lot

Fort Building Contest May 2, June 6, July 4, August 2, & September 6 10:00 am – 4:00 pm Form a team and test your architecture skills in the Nature Play Zone. Fun prizes will be awarded throughout the day. Douglas Center for Environmental Education - Nature Play Zone

Equestrian Open House May 3 10:00 am – 1:00 pm Join a ranger for an open house at the Glenwood Dunes Horse Trail to talk all things horse. You must bring your own horse. Glenwood Dunes Trailhead

Indiana Dunes Birding Festival May 7 – 10 Times vary The four-day festival will offer over 50 bird walks, hikes and programs. You must register to attend. A fee is required. Visit www.indunesbirdingfestival.com. Various locations in Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and State Park

Swimming Safely - Understanding the Great Lakes Surf Environment May 16 1:00 pm Every year people drown while swimming in Lake Michigan. Join Dave Benjamin and Bob Pratt of the Great Lakes Surf Rescue Project for a program on how to safely enjoy Lake Michigan. Visitor Center Auditorium

Garden Tea at Chellberg Farm May 16 1:00 pm Enjoy an afternoon “Garden Tea” on the front lawn of Chellberg Farm. During the Tea, learn how to plant and care for an heirloom flower garden. Chellberg Farm

Beginning Birding May 23 & 30, June 6 & 12, July 18, & August 8 9:00 am – 10:30 am Join a ranger for a beginning birding hike at the Great Marsh Trail. Great Marsh Trail

Kayaking at Marquette Lagoons May 30, June 21, July 19 & August 16 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Bring your own kayak and enjoy the view of the dunes from the lagoons at Marquette Park. Meet at Marquette Park Lagoon

Family Fishing Time July 25 & August 9 9:00 am – 12:00 pm Learn some basic fishing skills and drop a line in the Marquette Park. Equipment provided. Children under 18, do not need a license. Meet at Marquette Park Lagoon

Insects of the Dunes June 27, August 1, October 31 11:00 am – 3:00 pm Learn of the importance of the most numerous animals on earth as you join Chicago Field Museum expert Jim Louderman. Douglas Center for Environmental Education

Soundwalk in the Dunes July 18 11:00 am – 12:30 pm Join members of the Midwest Society for Acoustic Ecology celebrating World Listening Day. Tips on listening to the sounds of flora and fauna will be shared. Douglas Center for Environmental Education

Hike under the “Blue” & “Sturgeon” Moons July 31 & August 29 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm Enjoy a 2.5 mile evening hike under the rare “Blue Moon” in July and the “Sturgeon Moon” in August. Douglas Center for Environmental Education

Kayak Fishing with a Ranger at Portage Lakefront June 13 7:00 am – 11:00 am Join a ranger in the pursuit of the elusive Skamania Steelhead. You must provide your own equipment and lifejacket. Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk

Learn to Kayak June 20, 27, July 4, 11, 11, 25, Aug. 1, 15, 22, 29 and Sept. 5 9:00 am – 11:00 am Join a ranger and learn how to use a kayak. Kayak and safety equipment will be provided. Look for the ranger along the Kewalkee to Dunbar beach areas

Midsummer Celebration June 20 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm Celebrate the summer solstice with traditional Swedish music, dance and food. Chellberg Farm

Summer Solstice Evening Concert June 20 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm This outdoor concert features the band “Trillium” who performs traditional American music. The concert will be moved to the Visitor Center in bad weather. Chellberg Farm

Kayak Fishing with a Ranger at Lakeview July 18 7:00 am – 10:00 am Join a ranger for a paddle on Lake Michigan and join in the pursuit Lake Michigan Perch. You must provide all of your own equipment and lifejacket. Lakeview

Persied Meteor Shower August 11 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm Join a ranger for a spectacular evening light show courtesy of this annual meteor shower. West Beach

National Park Service Birthday Party August 23 1:30 pm & 3:00 pm Celebrate our 98th birthday and learn about the early days of the National Park Service. Douglas Center for Environmental Education

Apples, Apples, Apples September 19 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm Celebrate apples through traditional music, crafts and farming demonstrations. Try your hand at an old-fashioned apple cider press before enjoying a free sample. Chellberg Farm
Canoemobile
The canoes are coming back this fall! Last year we partnered with the Dunes Learning Center and Wilderness Inquiry and hosted over two weeks of free canoing programs for students in our area. This September and October we will be expanding that effort and bringing back the Canoemobile for another round of experiential learning. The first three weeks of October will be Canoemobile time at Wolf Lake in Hammond, Marquette Park in Gary and Lake George in Hobart. Students from a variety of schools are already signed up to participate. If neighbors are interested in assisting with this program, contact Kim Swift at 219-395-1812 for more information.

Park Shuttle Buses
This summer you may notice a couple of brand new shuttle buses transporting visitors throughout the national lakeshore. Received through a transportation grant, these two, 15-passenger vehicles are powered by cleaner-burning propane fuel. They'll also help reduce the number of cars on the road by transporting kids on Dunes Learning Center programs, picking up visitors at the train station, and shuttling participants on special tours. Find out more by contacting the visitor center information desk.

Campground Walk-In-Sites Reopen
After the completion of a habitat rehabilitation project, the walk-in sites of Dunewood Campground have reopened for the 2015 camping season. (April 24 through October 18). The number of walk-in sites has been reduced from twenty-five to twelve. The reduction in the number of sites provides greater privacy and more natural habitat between each of the sites. Another improvement is that each site now has two parking spaces. There is also an accessible pathway and campsite (number 55) available. Stays are limited to fourteen days and there is a two-tent, eight-person maximum on each site. Campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. No alcohol allowed.

50th Anniversary
We are fast approaching 2016 when we will celebrate both the 50th anniversary of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and the 100th of the National Park Service. If that's not enough of a reason to celebrate, the State of Indiana will also celebrate its 200th birthday! Starting this November, the national lakeshore will be offering a year’s worth of special programs and events in honor of our 50th. There will be a youth art contest, 50th Challenge activities, traveling exhibits of dunes art, an anniversary calendar, science conference, and Partner Fest to name just a few. Keep a lookout on the park’s website and Facebook page for more information.

Oak Savanna Rare Habitat Restoration
The national lakeshore is restoring 1045 acres of oak savanna within its Miller Woods and Tolleston Dunes units with support from its partner, Save the Dunes. Visitors to these areas may see and hear the sounds of restoration equipment, such as chain saws being used. Oak savanna is the continuum between prairie and woodland; it retains a ground layer of prairie grasses and flowers with minimal tree cover (10-40%). These units contain numerous wetlands which add to their biodiversity and importance to wildlife. The project seeks to improve wildlife habitat and increase the resiliency of this globally rare plant community by reducing woody vegetation to provide the light needed to support the grasses and flowers.

Our Newest National Park
Pullman National Monument was officially welcomed into the National Park Service on February 19, 2015. This new park site tells the story of the development of the first company-designed town, as well as, that of the American labor movement, including the first African-American labor union, the Pullman Porters. National lakeshore employees had the honor of helping in the start-up of this brand new park and continue to operate the site until permanent park staff can be hired. Located on the south side of Chicago, Pullman is a convenient day trip from the Indiana Dunes. Check out their website for programs and news at www.nps.gov/pull.

Mount Baldy Update
Work continues by scientists from the Indiana Geological Survey and both the Bloomington and Northwest campuses of Indiana University to determine the cause of holes that began opening up on the surface of Mount Baldy in 2013. A final report on this research is due to park staff in August of this year. Until then, general public access to the dune is not permitted. However, preliminary research results have shown a safe trail route up the very western edge of the dune. This summer, a limited number of ranger-guided hikes up this trail will be offered so the public can learn more about the research and restoration work being done on Mount Baldy. Contact the visitor center at 219-395-1882 for more information.

Dune Protection at Central Avenue
Our dunes may look like giant sand boxes just asking for visitors to romp and play on them, but they are actually fragile ecosystems that are homes to rare plants and animals. The national lakeshore is continuing its dune protection campaign this summer and focusing its work on Central Avenue Beach and the surrounding area. This beach is experiencing an increase in visitor use due to the closure at Mt. Baldy. Therefore, it is especially important that visitors stay on the trails and follow the signs laid out to keep fragile areas protected. Always stay on designated trails when hiking in the park. Your support will ensure our dunes are beautiful and protected for generations to come.

Reclaiming Park Land
Thirty structures built before the establishment of the national park are scheduled to be demolished this summer. After the structures are gone, ornamental and other non-native plants will be removed and the area will be restored to its natural state. This process of restoring habitat is a continuation of a nearly 30-year process of reclaiming developed land that was included in the national lakeshore. Once this land is reclaimed, trails and other visitor services can be provided so we can all enjoy our Indiana Dunes.

Our Campground Walk-In Sites Reopen.

Park Updates

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Dunes Scavenger Hunt

Get outdoors and spend the day exploring Indiana Dunes on a family-friendly scavenger hunt. You may get a bit sandy or muddy along the way, but that can be half the fun.

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore’s 15,000 acres of dunes, woods, marshes, and prairie includes almost 50 miles of trail and over 15 miles of beach stretching along the southern shore of Lake Michigan. But, with so many access points, it can be difficult to find all of this national park’s special places. The Dunes Scavenger Hunt guides you to nine special places where you can explore the diversity and beauty of the national lakeshore.

On your journey, you’ll get the chance to see one of the greatest fresh water lakes in the world, climb 250 stairs to the top of a West Beach dune for a spectacular view of Chicago on the horizon, hike through Miller Woods black oak savanna – one of the rarest habitats in the country, and take a look at Century of Progress homes from the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair.

It’s simple to get started. Just pick up a Dunes Scavenger Hunt passport at either the national lakeshore’s Visitor Center or Paul H. Douglas Center and start exploring. Complete your passport by visiting at least eight park locations, hiking some of the trails and answering one question related to each site. It’s not a race. You can spend extra time if you want to hike all the trails or you can spend less than a day and still get some great experiences.

Bring your completed passport booklet back to either center and get a free poster featuring our Indiana Dunes site logos and your choice of either a drawstring backpack or beach bag. Supplies are limited. You don’t actually collect anything during the scavenger hunt. National Parks are set aside as protected places and removing the plants, animals, or cultural artifacts found in them is strictly prohibited. Also, be sure to bring some water and protect yourself with insect repellent and sunscreen.

If you’re the type who prefers to blaze your own path, you certainly don’t need to do the activities of the scavenger hunt to explore the national lakeshore. It can be as simple as finding a spot on the park map that you’ve never been to and heading out on the trail to see what you find.

We’re sure you’ll agree a little sand or mud will be well worth the journey and it may turn out that you just can’t get enough of them!

Welcome from our Superintendent Paul Labovitz

A warm welcome to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore! If you’ve skipped us during the winter, you missed a lot of great cold weather fun. Our spring and summer birds are arriving, beaches are opening back up, and the promise of a great summer lies ahead. This is a place where you are encouraged to play outside. It is expected that you will get muddy, have sand between your toes, get a little sun and enjoy our warm weather insects. How many of our over 1200 species of plants will you see and learn more about? What might your 2015 Indiana Dunes bird list look like? Mature bald eagles are becoming more common, Sandhill Cranes returned to nest in 2014. Indiana Dunes is the start or end of a great visit to Chicago via the South Shore Line trains and one way to visit the newest National Park, Pullman National Monument, in South Chicago. The National Park Service and our partners in each of our Gateway communities and Indiana Dunes State Park welcome you to one of the best kept secrets in the Midwest. Don’t forget your binoculars, kayak, fishing gear, sunscreen, water and picnic basket. As you soak in all that Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore has to offer, imagine coming back next winter. I’d enjoy hearing about your visit.

We LOVE our volunteers! You can find them just about everywhere in the park! There are lots of ways to help. Here are just a few of them.

Stewardship Days bring volunteers out to remove invasive species and allow the native plants and animals of Indiana Dunes to thrive. Join a ranger on the 3rd or 4th Saturday of each month to help out with a stewardship project. To learn more, check out our Facebook page or contact us by e-mail at Ted.Winterfeld@nps.gov.

We have about 50 miles of trail in the national lakeshore. If you’re interested in hiking a section on a regular basis, join our Volunteer Site and Trail Corps. After you hike it, go on the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore’s Facebook page and post anything interesting you observed along the trail. It’s easy to join. Go to www.volunteer.gov, click on the state of Indiana, and apply to Volunteer Site and Trail Corps.

Want to be one in a million? For the 2016 Centennial Celebration of the National Park Service, the Department of the Interior wants to recruit one million people to volunteer for our public lands. You can be one of them. The National Park Service, including Indiana Dunes, posts all the volunteer opportunities at www.volunteer.gov. Search by park or by how you want to help.

Even the smallest volunteer jobs can be a big help in keeping the Indiana Dunes healthy.
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 a hat, long-sleeve shirts, and pants with cuffs 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.

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 help arrives.

Lake Michigan is a natural environment. Shifting 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. Keep your children at arm’s length at all times.

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. Consider staying out of the water and enjoy the lake from the beach. Even on clear days, you should rinse off with fresh water after swimming. Call 219-926-7561 followed by prompt #2 for information regarding E. coli levels.

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/vehicle 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 (Temporarily closed) | (Temporarily closed) | 

Parking Tips

- Parking along the road is prohibited.
- 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.
Where is the beach?
The 15-mile beach can be accessed from many different locations. See map on back.

Where may I climb a dune?
Most of the park trails cross over forested dunes. You must stay on a designated trail when you walk on any dune to protect this fragile resource.

West Beach offers a spectacular overlook on the one-mile Dune Scession Trail. The new Miller Woods Trail extension traverses the dunes to Marquette Park. 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 due to water conditions. Risks are inherent in all natural areas and you must determine what is safe for you. 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 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 (6’ or less) are permitted on most park trails. Pets are only permitted on the beach east of the Kemil access point.

The Glennon Dunes Trail (intersection of Hwy. 20 and School House Road) is open for horseback riding March 16 through December 14.

Hike with others and stay on designated trails for your protection and that of park resources. Trail maps are available at the two park visitor centers and the park web page.

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 (see map on back). Its 66 campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis for a fee of $18.00 per night. Credit or debit card ONLY. No cash or checks accepted.

The bedrooms are centrally located and have showers. Electrical hookups are not available. Use firewood from local suppliers to help prevent the spread of invasive insects. Alcohol is strictly prohibited.

How do I reserve a curriculum school program?
Teachers and youth group leaders should call 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. See www.nps.gov/indu/learn/education/index.htm for more information.

Can I take public transportation to the park?
The Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad stops at three stations within the park; Dune Park Station, Beverly Shores Station, and Ogden Dunes Station. In addition, the railroad’s Miller Station is located just south of the park. From the Miller Station, you can take the Gary Public Transportation Corporation’s Bus 13 directly to the Paul H. Douglas Center and close to the entrance of West Beach.

May I launch my boat and fish?
The park does not have a boat launch. Personal motorized watercraft (Jet Skis and Wave Runners) are prohibited. However, you may launch and/or hunt carry your non-motorized canoe or kayak at various locations. An Indiana state fishing license is required to fish. Motorized watercraft can be launched outside the park at Michigan City Marina, Portage Marina, and Lake Street Beach in Gary.

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 earn a badge, patch, sticker, or temporary tattoo. Pick up Junior Ranger and Junior Explorer materials at the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center and the Douglas Center, or download them at www.nps.gov/indu/learn/kidsyouth/beajuniorranger.htm, or ask a ranger.

Are there two Indiana Dunes Parks?
Yes, in addition to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore there is Indiana Dunes State Park. The state park is located next to the national park, and features towerng dunes, miles of beautiful beach and trail and a modern campground. Be sure to make a visit.

How do I find out about beach regulations?
Just look for a sign like this on the beach. Different areas have different regulations.

Regulations

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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.

Visit the bookstore inside the Visitor Center on SR49 near Hwy. 20 in Porter or www.easternnational.org.

These are just a few of our many partners. We’ll spotlight others in future issues!
pinhook bog

water safety

lake michigan waters can be hazardous. rough waters occur frequently during periods of high wind, and make it unsafe to enter the lake. 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. there are no lifeguards at the national lakeshore beach during the fall, winter, and spring.