

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore



Trail Map

# Cowles Bog Trail

*Experience your  
America™*



*The national lakeshore was established in 1966 to preserve for the educational, inspirational, and recreational use of the public, certain portions of the Indiana Dunes and other areas of scenic, scientific, and historic interest and recreational value in the state of Indiana. About two million annual visitors enjoy the park's 15,000 acres of wetlands, prairies, sand dunes, oak savannas, forests, and historic sites. The park's beach hugs the southern shore of Lake Michigan from Gary, Indiana, to Michigan City, Indiana. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu).*

Cowles Bog Trail highlights an area of such outstanding plant diversity that it was designated as a National Natural Landmark in 1965, a year before the national lakeshore was established. This location, where Dr. Henry Cowles conducted much of his early work in plant ecology and succession, remains an important focus for scientific study.

Explore several distinct habitats along this 4.5 mile trail including ponds, marsh, swamp, and black oak savanna. Steep sand dunes near Lake Michigan make this a very strenuous hike. Many visitors pack a lunch to enjoy at the shoreline while resting for the return trip (don't forget to "pack out" your trash).

This trail is a partnership between the National Park Service and the Town of Dune Acres.

*Hike over forty miles  
of trails at  
Indiana Dunes  
National Lakeshore*



National Park Service  
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore  
1100 N. Mineral Springs Rd  
Porter IN 46350  
[www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu)

Visitor Center 219-926-7561

## **Information & Safety**

**Trail Length** – 4.5 miles.

**Average Hike Time** – 2-3 hours.

**Trail Surface** – Mostly sand, with some sections of packed soil.

**Difficulty** – Moderate with steep, rugged sand dunes near Lake Michigan.

**Accessibility** – Not accessible to wheelchairs.

**Hours** – Open sunrise to 30 minutes past sunset.

**Pets** – Pets permitted on a leash (6' or shorter).

Do not disturb wildlife, pick plants or litter.

Avoid poison ivy by remaining on the marked trail.

Be prepared for changing weather conditions.

Use insect repellent, wear long sleeves, and tuck long pants into socks to avoid ticks.

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

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