

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

OVERVIEW: About this Audio-Described Brochure

Welcome to the audio-described version of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore's official print brochure. Through text and audio descriptions of photos, illustrations, and maps, this version interprets the two-sided color brochure that Sleeping Bear Dunes visitors receive. The brochure explores the history of the park, some of its highlights, and information for planning your visit. This audio version lasts about 30 minutes which we have divided into sections, as a way to improve the listening experience. The front page includes an overview and three sections: A Masterpiece of Ice Wind and Water; Diverse Natural Communities; and Home, Hardships, and Heroes. The back page has four text blocks and a map of the park.

OVERVIEW: Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

Description: Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, located in Michigan, is part of the National Park Service, within the Department of the Interior. The 71,187 acre park is located near Empire, Michigan, along the shoreline of Lake Michigan, including North and South Manitou Islands. This park, established in 1970, is a fairly young addition to the National Park system. Each year, nearly two million visitors come to enjoy the unique experiences that only can be had at the Lakeshore. We invite you to explore the park's forests, dunes, bluffs, lakes and beaches, as well as its historic landscapes and buildings. Here at the park, reaching Wilderness and solitude are just 5 minutes away. Listen to the crashing waves while feeling sand between your toes. Visit the towering dunes and bluffs of what people call the 'northern tropics.' Visit the Dune Climb to witness a whole other world and unique ecosystem and our visitor center to learn more about the park. To find out more about what resources might be available or to contact the park directly, visit the 'Accessibility' and 'More Information' sections at the end of this audio-described brochure.

OVERVIEW: Front Side of Brochure

Description: This is the front of the park brochure. A black bar spans the top of the brochure with Sleeping Bear Dunes in large white type and the arrowhead logo. An introduction to Sleeping Bear Dunes is near the top. The rest of the brochure front is broken up into three sections; A Masterpiece of Ice, Wind, and Water; Diverse Natural Communities; and Home, Hardships, and Heroes. Each section contains a row of photos with text underneath. All of this is layered over a photograph of the park.

IMAGE and TEXT: Sleeping Bear Dunes

DESCRIPTION: A photo of a sunset spans the top quarter of the brochure from edge to edge. The bright sun in the orange sky reflects in a pale blue Lake Michigan and casts an early evening light on the green, vegetated dunes in the middle ground and on the warm, rippled sand in the foreground. CREDIT: Kenneth Snyder

RELATED TEXT:

This is a land of legend, change, and survival. Ice, wind, and water shaped this place and continue to create a dynamic landscape—piercing blue lakes, immense stretches of dunes, and lush, deep forests. Nature’s pulse is all around you. Listen to the rhythm of the waves against the shore; the rise and fall of water and currents move shoals and shape shorelines. Feel the wind. Each day it sculpts the dunes, building here, removing there. Explore the shores, lakes, islands, and forests. Discover personal stories of hardship, heroism, and resilience; witness struggles for survival in plant, fish, bird, and mammal communities; experience accessible wilderness and the glow of the Milky Way arching across a clear night sky. Relax. Enjoy. Make memories and a connection to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

TEXT: [The legend of Sleeping Bear](#)

The Anishinaabe Legend of the Manitou Islands and Sleeping Bear Dune. Once, long ago, across the great lake in Wisconsin, there was terrible hunger and many people and animals died. A bear and her two little cubs, desperate for food, left that place to swim the long distance to the other side of the lake.

After a while the cubs became very tired, and so the bear said, “Try hard, the land is not very far.” But gradually the cubs weakened. Exhausted, one cub sank into the water when they were within sight of land, and soon after the other also drowned.

The bear’s heart was broken, but she could do nothing. She waded ashore and climbed the bluff to lie down, looking out on the water where her cubs had died. However, both of them surfaced as two little islands. And so the bear still lies there now, looking after her children.

IMAGE and TEXT: [A masterpiece of ice, wind, and water](#)

DESCRIPTION: Map outlining the United States, Mexico, and Canada in a tan color. A white overlay of the Continental Ice Sheet covers all of Canada and the northern Great Lakes areas. The land features are still visible under the white ice sheet. The sheet is outlined in light blue with the words “Continental Ice Sheet” on it, written in blue. The countries of Canada, United States, and Mexico are labeled in a dark beige. The words “Great Lakes” are printed in a curve along the northeast side of the Great Lakes. Lake Michigan is labeled in black, and a black dot and bolder text label identifies Sleeping Bear Dunes.

RELATED TEXT: What encouraged you to come to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore? The dunes? The lake? The forests? The wilderness? You may not have thought about it, but it was ice. Heavy, powerful, and up to a mile thick, glaciers advanced from the north over two million years ago. Creeping along like bulldozers, they moved rock and soil, gouging, carving, deepening, and widening existing drainages and rivers. Around 14,000 years ago temperatures

warmed and the glaciers started to melt. The glaciers retreated, leaving behind ridges, glacial kettles, moraines, and other glacial landforms. The melt- water filled in the holes, creating the Great Lakes, smaller lakes, and wetlands. Since that time, westerly winds, water, and weather continue to impact the land. Sometimes the change is gradual, but occasionally, storms transform the landscape in a matter of hours. The dunes are the most prominent feature here and are most affected by winds blowing across Lake Michigan. They are part of a dune system that stretches along western Michigan, the largest fresh- water dune system in the world. The tallest and most spectacular are perched dunes—piles of sand blown on top of glacial moraines (plateaus of rock and sand debris), left by retreating glaciers. Lower beach and falling or de-perched dunes are also found here.

Waves and currents refine the lakeshore you see today. The water level has changed many times since the glaciers retreated. Waves eroded the jutting headlands and bays.

Currents carried sediment, building sandbars—some so wide they created inland lakes, like Glen and Platte lakes.

From day to day and year to year, nature is constantly sculpting, molding, and reshaping this masterpiece of ice, wind, and water. What will the next change be?

IMAGE: Ice

DESCRIPTION: Color photo of winter ice formations on the shore of Lake Michigan comprised of large jagged blocks in various shapes and sizes that flattens out as they move further out into the lake. The ice is an translucent greenish blue and is lighter along the shore. Sunset turns clouds a light shade of purple and lights a band of pink along the horizon.

CAPTION: Each winter nature’s ice sculptures remind us of the continental ice sheets, which formed the Great Lakes and other features of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. CREDIT: Ken Scott Photography

IMAGE: Wind

DESCRIPTION: A close-up color photo of dune grass growing out of the sand on a dune, on a clear, blue sky day. The long, thin, green and tan blades rise up out of the sand, some of them curling over, forming tufted tan tops. There is a large clump of grass on the left and smaller clumps as you move down the dune and across the image. The sand covered dune rises up to the left, with large sections of dune grass visible in the background.

CAPTION: Dune grass roots hold the sand in place, stabilizing and protecting the dune habitat for other species who live here. Help protect the fragile dunes by staying on designated trails. CREDIT: NPS/SLBE

IMAGE: Water

DESCRIPTION: A color photo of the view from the top of a dune where a vast expanse of green blue water reaches all the way to the horizon. White capped waves break on the sandbars. A

dense forest with the tops of evergreen trees pointing upwards is right below the viewpoint and fluffy elongated clouds cover most of the sky in a blue gray color.

CAPTION: Wave action and currents continually shape Lake Michigan.

CREDIT: Ken Scott Photography

IMAGE and TEXT: [Diverse Natural Communities](#)

DESCRIPTION: A horizontal, panoramic, color photo of the vast expanse of a very large lake, forested dunes, exposed sandy bluffs, and an inland lake. The sun is shining through partly cloudy skies over the blue and turquoise waters of the large lake. To the far left, a tall bluff lit by the sun, towers over the water, its dune face exposing sand. From there, the beaches and forested dunes wrap forward around the lake in a semi circle to the far right of the photo. Surrounding the beaches and dunes are miles of dense green forests. Peeking out of the forest is a thin blue line of an inland lake, leading to a sand bar separating the inland lake from the large lake. A dark blue strip of land marks the horizon.

CAPTION: The view from Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive of North Bar Lake, Empire Bluff, and Platte River Point shows waters, beaches, dunes, and forests.

CREDIT: Ken Scott Photography

RELATED TEXT: The dunes are, perhaps, the best known and most visited habitat within the lakeshore. However, other complex habitats—northern hardwood, pine, and boreal forests; interdunal wetlands, bogs and fens; 26 inland lakes; and several rivers and streams—are home to a wide variety of fragile plant and animal communities that are continually shaped by natural processes.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore preserves 71,000 acres of natural habitat.

Management includes monitoring, research, and restoration efforts to help maintain the complex and delicate web of life.

TEXT: [Waters](#)

Waters in the park, including Lake Michigan, inland lakes, and streams are designated as "Outstanding State Water Resources." They support diverse, high-quality aquatic communities, including warm- and coldwater fisheries, many amphibian species, and a variety of aquatic life.

IMAGE and TEXT: [Beaches](#)

DESCRIPTION: A close-up color photo of a small, round beige bird with a white belly nesting on two round, speckled eggs in pebbly sand. A black bar marks circles his neck. The bird's round head has a round black eye, thin black stripe across its forehead, and a pointed orange beak with a black tip. A skinny orange leg peeks out of at the left side of the bird's fluffy round body. Blurred sand, pebbles, and rocks are in the background.

CAPTION: Piping plover with eggs

CREDIT: USFWS/Bill Byrne

RELATED TEXT: Beaches occur where water meets land, extending from the water's edge to the reach of the highest storm wave. They are an important foraging habitat for many shorebirds, as well as nesting habitat for piping plovers, endangered due to habitat loss, predation, and disturbance of nesting sites. Help us protect these vulnerable birds by keeping dogs on a leash and obeying all closure signs.

IMAGE and TEXT: Dunes

DESCRIPTION: A close-up color photo of Pitcher's thistle, a plant growing in dune sand with bright blue skies and darker blue waters behind it. The plant's leaves are long and thin with several stems that have big round buds standing out of the base of the plant. Two of the buds are open showing spiky pink petals popping out of the round bud, forming tufts. Surrounding the plant is tall thin dune grass.

CAPTION: Pitcher's thistle

CREDIT: John Bagley

RELATED TEXT: Dunes along Lake Michigan are ecologically unique and support a diversity of plants and wildlife. Within the Lakeshore, the process of dune formation, stabilization, and movement continues largely uninterrupted along 65 miles of shoreline.

Pitcher's thistle is a threatened dune plant that is globally rare, but commonly seen here due to large areas of preserved dune habitat.

IMAGES and TEXT: Forests

IMAGE 1 of 2: Red tailed hawk

DESCRIPTION: Color photo of a red tailed hawk in flight. A sharp pointed small beak lies between two large piercing eyes looking toward the left. The small round head is attached to a large oval body with two long feathery legs hanging straight down. Attached to the feathery legs are smooth feet with sharp talons resembling claws. Towering from the body are vertical shoulders with long feathers flaring up and out to the sides creating wings. Peeking out the back of the body is a triangular flat cluster of tail feathers. The underbelly and underside of the wings are white with black spots. The outer part of the bird is brown with brown stripes on the ends of its feathers.

CAPTION: Red-tailed hawk

CREDIT: Ken Scott Photography

IMAGE 2 of 2: Winter scene

DESCRIPTION: A color photo looking down a river flowing between snow covered banks flanked with evergreen and bare trees, many of them leaning toward the river. A blue sky with some clouds, peeks through branches and is reflected in the water; small ripples create sparkles where sunlight hits the surface. A small tree fallen across the river spans from bank to bank.

CAPTION: Winter in the forest

CREDIT: Ken Scott Photography

RELATED TEXT: Forests here are mostly secondary growth and are of a scale and quality rare on the Great Lakes shoreline. A small stand of old-growth cedars (400–500 years old) remains on South Manitou Island. The diverse forests support a variety of wildlife.

IMAGE and TEXT: Home, hardships, and heroes

DESCRIPTION: A colored photo of one of the many farms in the Lakeshore. Four farm buildings, a wooden barn with a cupola; a small, cedar-shaked chicken coop partly obscured by a tree; a brightly painted red garage, and a wooden shed stand in a line against a red and gold backdrop of trees on a ridge with a golden field of grass in the foreground.

CAPTION: Bufka Farm at Port Oneida

CREDIT: Ken Scott Photography

RELATED TEXT: Following the retreat of the last glaciers, prehistoric people were active in the area. They lived in seasonal camps fishing, gathering, hunting, and trapping. The Anishinaabe people were living here when Europeans arrived in the mid-1600s. In the early to mid- 1800s, Europeans settled on the Manitou islands and later moved to the mainland.

Visit Port Oneida Rural Historic District and Glen Haven to step back in time. These once thriving communities are a testament to the hard- working immigrant families who chose this rugged land as their home. Imagine their struggles and hardships, and marvel at their resourcefulness. Life here was hard. Would you have been up to the challenge?

IMAGE and TEXT: Glen Haven

DESCRIPTION: Historic black and white photo of the Glen Haven dock. The dock, in the middle of the photo reaches straight out toward the horizon and widens to a tee shape at the end. Rails for a small train run along the left side of the dock. A large steamer waits on this side of the dock to be loaded, its bow pointing forward. From the front, the ship is taller than it is wide, painted black on the bottom half and white on top. A smaller wheelhouse sits behind the bow; dark smoke billows from a pipe; and a tall thin mast points to the sky. A wooden storage building sits on the right side of the dock. People walk down the dock toward the ship.

CAPTION: Steamship at dock

CREDIT: Courtesy Leelanau Historical Society Museum

RELATED TEXT: Glen Haven played a role in three of Northern Michigan’s economic eras— lumbering, agriculture, and tourism. A stop for ships to take on fuel wood, it provided food, lodging, and services to travelers along Lake Michigan. Its economic evolution can be traced to visionary businessman David Henry Day, who pioneered sustainable forestry, helped introduce fruit orchards, and brought tourism to the area. Today, you can tour the fruit cannery (now a boat museum), general store, and blacksmith shop.

IMAGE and TEXT: Port Oneida

DESCRIPTION: A color photo of a bright red horse drawn wagon standing in front of a white farmhouse with sunny blue skies above. The two dark brown horses hitched to the front of the wagon are almost as big as the wagon itself. The wagon driver, with reins in his hands, turns to look back at the group of people in the wagon, ready for their ride.

CAPTION: Farm life program

CREDIT: NPS/SLBE

RELATED TEXT, Port Oneida, settled predominantly by German and Prussian immigrants, was a lumbering, farming, and port community. In the 1860s, Thomas Kelderhouse built a dock and sawmill, harvesting forests to sell as fuel to the steamships traveling across Lake Michigan. By the 1890s the forests were cleared, and the dock and mill were closed. Poor soil conditions forced some residents to move to support their families. Today the Port Oneida Rural Historic District is the nation's largest publicly owned historic agricultural landscape.

IMAGE and TEXT: Treacherous Passage

DESCRIPTION: In this color photo, the sun shines on South Manitou Island's bright white lighthouse in front of a clear blue sky. The lighthouse tower rises from the other low slung white buildings on the shore. Two red roofs and a red cylindrical building add bright spots of color. The dark green forest edges close behind the buildings, and the cold blue water of Lake Michigan isolates it from the rest of the world.

CAPTION: South Manitou Lighthouse

CREDIT: Steven Huyser-Honig

RELATED TEXT: The Manitou Passage, a 36-mile-long waterway between the mainland and Manitou islands, is a main shipping lane through Lake Michigan. It provides one of the few sheltered bays between the Straits of Mackinac and Chicago but hides dangerous shoals and sandbars. Before modern navigational aids, stranded and wrecked ships were common here, leading to the construction of the South Manitou Lighthouse (1839), North Manitou Lighthouse (1896), and North Manitou Shoal Light (1935).

IMAGES and TEXT: US Life-Saving Service

DESCRIPTION: A historic black and white photo of a team of early 1900s surfmen pushing a surfboat set on rails out of a large wooden doored boathouse. There are four men pushing on each side of the white wooden boat. Each man wears dark pants, a white shirt, a dark brimmed sailing cap, and sports a life vest made from cork.

CAPTION: Surfboat and crew

CREDIT: NPS/SLBE

RELATED TEXT: You have to go out, but you don't have to come back—motto, US Life-Saving Service. In 1871 Congress created the US Life-Saving Service (USLSS). Stations were built on North and South Manitou islands and Sleeping Bear Point. From 1871 to 1915 courageous

surfmen and keepers rescued over 178,000 people from shipwrecks. In 1915 the USLSS merged with the US Revenue Cutter Service, forming the US Coast Guard. Visit the Sleeping Bear Point US Life-Saving Service Station Maritime Museum, just west of Glen Haven, to find out more.

OVERVIEW: [Back Side of Brochure](#)

Description: The back of this brochure includes a large illustrated map of the northwest corner of Michigan and includes the boundaries, marked in shades of green, of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore including North and South Manitou Islands. The rest of the page is light blue representing Lake Michigan and also serves as the background for the text that includes exploring Sleeping Bear Dunes with information for a safe visit, things to do, wilderness, and accessibility information.

TEXT: [Exploring Sleeping Bear Dunes](#)

Sleeping Bear Dunes is a perfect blend of dunes, beaches, and forests. Stop at the Philip A. Hart Visitor Center in Empire, Michigan, for information, exhibits, park video, bookstore, and Junior Ranger programs. Open daily except Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1; hours vary seasonally.

Popular activities include exploring the stops along the 7.4-mile Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive, climbing the Dune Climb, hiking or biking through the woods, and swimming in the clear waters. For activities and programs, pick up the free park visitors guide at the visitor center or ranger stations, or visit www.nps.gov/slbe.

MAP: [Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore](#)

DESCRIPTION: Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore comprises over 71,000 acres in northwestern Michigan on the shore of Lake Michigan, including two islands and the mainland park. The two Manitou Islands shown in the top third of the map are primarily Wilderness and are reached seasonally via ferries that run out of Leland, Michigan. The park's mainland area resembles a triangle on the map starting a third of the way from the top. The first side of the triangle runs along the right edge of the map page, the second along the bottom of the page, and the third runs in an irregular diagonal back up to the right edge. Access to the park's mainland area is primarily via M-22 which runs north and south through the park. The Philip A. Hart visitor center is located in the center of the mainland area on the map near the intersection of M-22 and M-72. Road construction and seasonal road conditions require closure of certain roads.

Following M-22 south from the top of the triangle along the 32 miles of shoreline, the road passes through the south end of the Port Oneida Historic District, an historic farming landscape, and on to the town of Glen Arbor near the middle of the map. In Glen Arbor, M-22 turns south and continues on past the turquoise-colored Glen Lakes to Empire, Michigan. A second road, M-109, continues west out of Glen Arbor to the Glen Haven Historic Village in the center of the

map. D. H. Day Campground and the Sleeping Bear Point U. S. Life-Saving Service Station and Maritime Museum are nearby.

Continuing on the now southbound M-109, the road passes by the Dune Climb, where people love to run up a dune, and the road to the Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive which offers spectacular views, breezes, and geological insights into how the dunes were formed. Further south, M-109 and M-22 meet up again and head toward Empire and the visitor center.

Traveling south out of Empire to the southern section of the park and the bottom third of the map, the road passes many beach access points and trailheads on its way to Platte River Point and the Platte River Campground. At this point, in the middle left of the bottom third of the map, the Platte River meets up with Lake Michigan and is a busy place, as river floaters and paddlers meet up with beach goers, campers, and picnickers. A bit further along M-22, Loon Lake offers access to the inland lake with a floating dock and transfer system. Campgrounds, beach access, trailheads, inland lake access, picnic spots, and restrooms can be accessed from M-22, however, not all services are available year-round.

TEXT: For a safe visit

Watch out for poison ivy. Avoid its three leaflets, stems, berries, and roots, all can cause a severe reaction.

Check often for ticks and remove promptly.

Conditions on Lake Michigan can change rapidly and become hazardous. Boaters should monitor weather reports, carry safety gear, navigation charts, and extra fuel.

Swimmers should be aware of rip current conditions.

Stay off steep and snow covered dunes.

Climbing is recommended only at the Dune Climb.

TEXT: Regulations

Drive only on established roads.

Keep pets on a leash. They are permitted on hiking trails April 1 through November 30. Pets are not allowed at North Bar Lake, on the Manitou islands, in backcountry campgrounds, on the Dune Climb, or on some swimming beaches.

Fires are permitted only in fire rings and picnic fireplaces.

Beach fires are restricted to bare sand between the water and the first dun, fires on Manitou islands are permitted only in fire rings in designated campgrounds.

You may pick mushrooms and fruit for personal, non commercial use.

Bicycles must stay on roads or the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail.

Glass containers are prohibited in areas used for sunbathing, swimming, or wading.

Horses are permitted only on the Alligator Hill Trail.

Check the park website for firearms regulations.

OVERVIEW: Accessibility

We strive to make our facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to the visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check our website.

TEXT: Things to see and do

Hiking Trails: Over 100 miles of trails—easy, moderate, or strenuous—offer something for everyone. For details check out trail maps at the visitor center and posted at trailheads, or visit www.nps.gov/slbe.

Manitou Islands: To really get away from it all, take a backpacking trip to the islands. A camping permit is required. No commercial services are available. Ferry service operates from Leland, MI, May to September. Contact Manitou Island Transit at 231-256-9061 or www.leelanau.com/manitou.

Camping: Camp only in campgrounds, except for dispersed camping on North Manitou. The park offers a variety of camping: modern sites and facilities at Platte River Campground, a more rustic experience at D.H. Day Campground, and backcountry camping at a walk-in campground on the mainland or on the Manitou islands. Campers may only collect dead and down wood—and none on the dunes. Get more information and permits at the visitor center or ranger stations.

Hunting/Fishing: Hunting and fishing are allowed in season under state regulations, but prohibited near high-visitor use areas, facilities and structures, and Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive when open. Check the Michigan hunting digests and Fishing Guide for information about regulations.

Stargazing: Truly dark skies, like the ones here, are critical to nocturnal habitats. Many species rely on natural patterns of day and night for navigating, cueing behaviors, and hiding from predators. Ask a ranger what you can do to help protect the night sky.

Winter Recreation: From mid-November to late March, the dunes become a winter wonderland. Cross country ski or snowshoe throughout the park or join a ranger-led snowshoe hike. About 50 miles of marked trails are ungroomed, and portions of the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail are groomed. Snowmobiling is prohibited except on rights-of-way along some state and county roads.

Drones: Prohibited without a permit.

TEXT: Wilderness

In 2014, Congress designated over 32,500 acres of the park as wilderness under the 1964 Wilderness Act. Preserving wilderness benefits generations to come.

OVERVIEW: [More Information](#)

ADDRESS: 9922 Front St.

Empire, Michigan 49630

PHONE: 231 326 4700

WEBSITE: www.nps.gov/slbe

Sleeping Bear Dunes is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System.

Learn more about national parks at www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation: www.nationalparks.org.