



SITE RESOURCE PACKET

CROW ISLAND WOODS



A green leaf-shaped graphic with the word "WELCOME" written in white, uppercase letters inside it.

WELCOME

WELCOME TO BACKYARD NATURE CENTER'S SITE RESOURCE PACKET

(BYNC) has selected and described six nature sites in New Trier Township that represent the diversity of the Township's open spaces. It is our hope that these Resource Packets serve as your roadmap to discovery as you explore and enjoy the various parks, managed natural lands, and forest preserves.

BackYard Nature Center's (BYNC) mission is to connect children and adults, individuals and groups, with the joys and wonders of nature. We believe this connection benefits both the natural world and the lives of the participants.

This Site Resource Packet offers:

- Road map to Crow Island Woods
- Site map with highlighted areas of interest
- Physical features, e.g., picnic pavilions, restrooms, nature trails
- Ecological and biological features, e.g., tree and flower diversity
- Information and questions, accompanied with photos, regarding the Crow Island Woods site, are included in the "Areas of Interests" section to encourage discussion and study. They serve as a suggested starting point and frame of reference, and can be modified to fit the students' level of learning.

Please let us know how we can make your encounter with nature more meaningful. Contact us for more information and give us your comments about your experience. BYNC looks forward to hearing from you!

BackYard Nature Center: <http://backyardnaturecenter.org>
BYNC@backyardnaturecenter.org

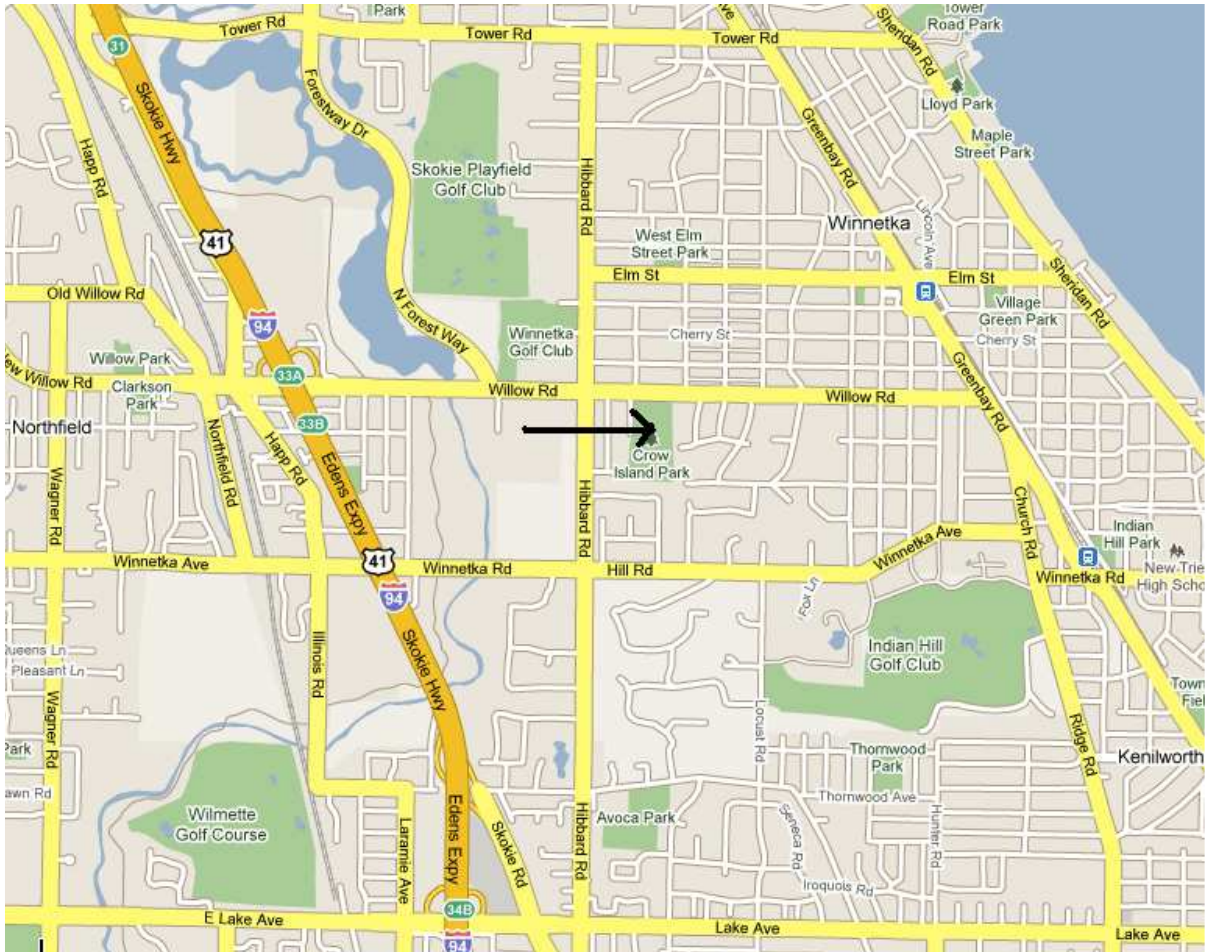
Crow Island Site (Winnetka Park District): www.winpark.org
wpdinfo@winpark.org
(847) 501-2040



CROW ISLAND WOODS

ROAD MAP TO SITE

The driveway entering Crow Island Woods begins on Willow Road just west of Crow Island Elementary School and 25 ft. east of Euclid Avenue.



SITE MAP



CROW ISLAND WOODS



Featured Areas

- A** Wooded area
- B** Wooded hedgerow (evergreen) area
- C** Pavilion, picnic area, open space
- D** Sedge meadow, wet prairie grasses area
- E** Historic area

**AREAS
OF INTEREST**

CROW ISLAND WOODS

Access

On-site parking

Map Area

B

General Features

Pavilion

C

Picnic tables

C

Fire pit

C

Nature trails

A

Open space – large landscaped grassy areas

D

Boardwalk and sedge/prairie restored area

D

Historic building

E

Ecological Features

A full forest community: wetlands, prairie, savanna, woodland, and forest

A B C D

Deer rut damage to some trees; white oak blight present on some trees

A

Biological Features

Transitional forest area (ash dominated); climax forest (oak-hickory)

A

Some hybrid swamp oak/white oak; some wildflowers

A

Vines

B

Many small bird species

A

Stand of white pines

B

Potential Activities

Stewardship (e.g. buckthorn cutting, planting)

A D

Educational subjects taught using natural objects from the site

A B C D E

(e.g. math, botany, history, art, writing/poetry, environmental science)

Discovery (e.g. bird walks, native flower discovery)

A D

AREAS OF INTEREST

Information and Suggested Learning Topics



A unique feature of Crow Island Woods is that it contains a full forest community: wetlands, prairie, savanna, and woodland. What are the major distinctions of these community types?

Permit required with groups of 10 or more:
 Park only fee: Residents NC / NR \$50
 Park with shelter fee: Residents NC / NR \$100
 Park only deposit: Residents \$50 / NR \$100
 Park with shelter deposit: Residents \$100/ NR \$200



Area D: Sedge Meadow Signage

History:

The 1-acre sedge meadow is a remnant of the original landscape of west Winnetka before the land was cleared, drained, and reshaped for development. The sign elaborates on the area's history and describes the properties of a sedge meadow with photos of native flowers.

Where else in a 10-mile radius can you find a sedge meadow?



Area D: Sedge Meadow, Wet Prairie Grasses (Winter)

Sedge and grasses look alike, but are not the same. Sedges have triangular stems, while grasses have a round stem. Can you feel the difference? What would you expect to see in this meadow in April? June? August? Why the differences?

AREAS
OF INTEREST



Sedge Meadow Prescribed Burn

Isn't fire a bad thing? Why are they setting fire to the meadow?

What are the chemical and biological effects on the soil as a result of a forest fire? What impact did the great fire of 1988 at Yellowstone National Park have on the Park today? Describe the impact over the 12 year period.



Area C: Pavilion

Restrooms, fire pit and picnic tables

Restroom key and permit forms are available from the Winnetka Park District.



Area A: Wooded Area

Trees are identified by their bark and leaves or needles. Can you identify the trees in this woodland? What are the ecological factors that might affect the density and richness of the trees in this area?

All forests, woodlands, and savannas have trees. What are the differences among these 3 types of ecological communities?

AREAS
OF INTEREST



Woodland Area A

Black snakeroot and other examples of native vegetation are situated along the path. What other flowers or plants can you see? What time of year would these appear? Why?



Woodland Area A

Cord grass and goldenrod.

Write a story from the perspective of the squirrel you see while walking in this woodland (or chipmunk, rabbit, or any animal or bird you see).

AREAS OF INTEREST



Area B: Wooded hedgerow (evergreen) area:

Mathematical exploration in a natural setting is extensive. How does nature, especially the pine cone, help us to understand the “golden rule” of numbers and other Fibonacci examples?



Area E: Historic - Schmidt-Burnham Log House

Oldest known log structure in Cook County (built circa 1837). Log houses were designed to be more permanent and weather-tight than log cabins.

What did your community look like in 1850? Draw a road map, and describe the economical, geographical and social features of the day.

Where did the clothes, building materials, and food come from in 1850 to reach your community and by what means did it arrive?