

The Dunes Region Itineraries

While every Beyond the Beach Discovery Trail site is worth visiting, if you're short on time, you'll only be able to visit a few. Below are recommendations for great sites to visit in a day...or two.

Spend a Day

- Start at the Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center (Site 1) for maps and birding, fishing, or biking companion guides. Be sure to pick up the *Indiana Dunes Activities Guide*. This guide will provide detailed information about restaurants and accommodations in the Dunes, Moraine, and Kankakee regions as you explore the Trail.
- Climb the highest sand dune in Indiana! Mt. Tom at Indiana Dunes State Park (Site 17) is located along State Park Trails 4 and 8 and towers 192 feet above Lake Michigan. Sledding and the cross-country ski trails at this park are great in the winter. In warmer months, you may be inclined to camp here and spend days exploring the entire park.
- Café and restaurant options are plentiful in the Duneland Communities of Chesterton, Porter, and Burns Harbor, as well as Beverly Shores.
- For an afternoon of history and culture, head toward Lake Front Drive in Beverly Shores: View the Century of Progress Homes (Site 24) from the street. After your driving tour of the Homes, stop in at the Depot of Beverly Shores Museum and Art Gallery (Site 25).
- The Lake View Picnic Area (Site 23) is a great place to watch the sunset (as well as spring and fall waterfowl for birding enthusiasts).

Or

- For more solitude, wander the miles of trail through marshes, oak savanna, and dunes at Cowles Bog (Site 15). You can birdwatch and see unique plant communities, or in the winter after a heavy lake effect snow, hit the trails for an invigorating cross-country ski!

Add a day and make it a weekend!

- Hang out for the evening and enjoy indoor or outdoor dining in one of the Duneland Communities or Beverly Shores. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.
- Stay overnight at a bed and breakfast or a nearby hotel located in the Duneland Communities. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.
- Tired after your first day or not up for hiking? You can watch the sunrise (or sunset) right from your car in the west lot at the Indiana Dunes State Park (Site 17).
- On your second day, head to West Beach (Site 5) and explore the nearly one-mile succession trail that will lead you from the beach, through blowouts with intermittent ponds, over dunes, and through the woods. Jack

Pines grow along the trail much further south of their range. A favorite of beach goers, West Beach has more to offer those who have the time to wander inland.

- Have lunch (or dinner) just a short drive away in Portage at nearby AmeriPlex. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.
- After lunch, check out Portage's newest park—Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk (Site 7). Managed jointly by the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and the City of Portage, this area features an enclosed pavilion with restrooms, an accessible loop trail, and a fishing pier. The pavilion is not only beautiful, but is Gold LEED certified, built with exemplary, energy-efficient environmental design and materials. A new concrete cap and handrails on the breakwater provide easy access for fishing, birdwatching, and sightseeing.

Or

- Immerse yourself in local history at the Bailly-Chellberg Homesteads (Site 13). Explore on your own or arrange a guided tour, view spring wildflowers and the Mnoke prairie, hike, or birdwatch. You might also time your visit to coincide with two festivals held here—the Maple Sugar Time Festival (March) and Duneland Heritage Days (September).

The Moraine Region Itineraries

While every Beyond the Beach Discovery Trail site is worth visiting, if you're short on time, you'll only be able to visit a few. Below are recommendations for great sites to visit in a day...or two.

Spend a Day

- Start at the Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center (Site 1) for maps and birding, fishing, or biking companion guides. Be sure to pick up the *Indiana Dunes Activities Guide*. This guide will provide detailed information about restaurants and accommodations in the Dunes, Moraine, and Kankakee regions as you explore the Trail.
- Head to Taltree Arboretum and Gardens (Site 44) to explore formal gardens as well as restored native landscapes. Hike the trails and perhaps enjoy a summer concert or one of the many classes offered throughout the year on topics such as gardening, photography, or yoga.
- Have lunch nearby at one of downtown Valparaiso's many cafes and restaurants. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.
- Then visit Broken Wagon Bison Farm (Site 43) to see bison and buy a range of bison products. Bring your cooler!
- End your day at Ogden Gardens and Forest Park (Sites 37-38) where you can explore more formal gardens and restored oak forest, watch butterflies and hummingbirds, and perhaps picnic.

Or

- Nature enthusiasts will want to tour Pinhook Bog (Site 30), Indiana's only true bog and a unique geologic feature in the region. The bog contains a vast array of plants with various adaptations for survival and is a must-see for any nature-lover. Hours and tour size are limited. Contact the National Lakeshore or Visitor Center for additional information.

Add a day and make it a weekend!

- Stick around and, weather permitting, enjoy dinner at one of Valparaiso's many outdoor dining venues.
- Take in a show or concert at the Memorial Opera House (Site 40). The Opera House features hip bands, new musicals, and traditional productions in a classy, historic setting. Visit www.mohlive.com to see what will be featured during your stay.
- Stay the night in a bed and breakfast or at one of the many nearby hotels in Valparaiso. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.
- On day two, explore the lakes at Rogers-Lakewood Park (Site 35). Enjoy swimming, fishing, picnicking, or the two-mile hiking/

biking trail. This park also has a disc golf course and paddle boat rentals. For the adventurous, navigate the lakes yourself! If you have your own small boat, you can launch nearby at Long Lake Public Access (site 34).

- Bring a picnic or have lunch in one of Valparaiso's many cafes and restaurants. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.
- If you are visiting in the spring, enjoy the drive to Zona Wildlife Sanctuary (Site 31) for an impressive array of spring wildflowers and a short hiking trail.

Or

- Sample local abundance at Anderson's Vineyard and Winery (Site 32), where you'll find wine tasting and sales, fresh produce in season, and local jams and jellies.

The Kankakee Region Itineraries

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The river snaked through one of the country's largest freshwater wetlands—500,000 acres known as the Grand Kankakee Marsh.

Spend a Day

- Start at the Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center (Site 1) for maps and birding, fishing, or biking companion guides. Be sure to pick up the *Indiana Dunes Activities Guide*. This guide will provide detailed information about restaurants and accommodations in the Dunes, Moraine, and Kankakee regions as you explore the Trail.

- Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area (Site 50) is well known to hunters and anglers, but a trip to this site for nature enthusiasts who visit in November is well worth the drive. This designated Audubon Important Bird Area provides more than 8000 acres of ideal habitat for migratory birds. In November, sandhill cranes number in the tens of thousands — quite a spectacle! View this short film to learn more about the migration at www.in.gov/dnr/slides/cranes/index.html.

- Enjoy lunch or dinner in Kouts. Check the *Activities Guide* to find the perfect spot.

Or

- Move on to spend the afternoon paddling or motoring the Kankakee River. There's no livery at Dunn's Bridge County Park (site 48)—yet. But for those with small boats, canoes, or kayaks, Dunn's boasts a historic bridge and

a nice launch for small boats and plenty of parking right on the Kankakee.

Add a day and make it a weekend!

- Stick around and enjoy dinner in Hebron or at one of Valparaiso's many downtown dining venues. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.

- Stay the night in a bed and breakfast or at one of the many hotels in Valparaiso. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.

- The following day, explore the Grand Kankakee Marsh County Park (Site 51) for spring birdwatching, wildlife watching, boat launch, fishing, hunting, and hiking.

- Enjoy lunch in Hebron or head back to Valparaiso. Check the *Activities Guide* for details.

- Spend the afternoon fishing or strolling along the Kankakee and bayous at LaSalle Fish and Wildlife Area (Site 52). Shoreline fishing is an option and three boat ramps are available. Your catch of the day may include small or largemouth bass, walleye, bluegill or rock bass. Parking area and Access Road 3 offer scenic roadside wildlife viewing!