

nature trails guide

BIRD GARDEN

Many birds travel through Chicago as they migrate to different locations throughout the year. This bird garden is planted with trees, shrubs, and groundcover that offer food, protection, and nesting sites to birds in the area.

ELIZABETH PLOTNICK TALLGRASS PRAIRIE

Prairies are home to many grasses and wildflowers but very few, if any, trees. Fires help to control the growth of non-prairie plants like trees. Prairie plants survive these fires because their growing buds are below ground.

PICKERELWEED POND

This small wetland provides a home for plants, animals, and other living things. It gets its name from a flowering wetland plant known as pickerelweed. Invertebrates such as dragonflies, beetles, and snails, and vertebrates such as Canada geese and tadpoles, can often be found in this small pond.

BUR OAK SAVANNA

Savannas are grasslands with scattered trees. Fire-resistant bur oak trees are speckled throughout this savanna, providing a mix of sun and shade for the plants that grow beneath them.

URBAN VEGETABLE GARDEN

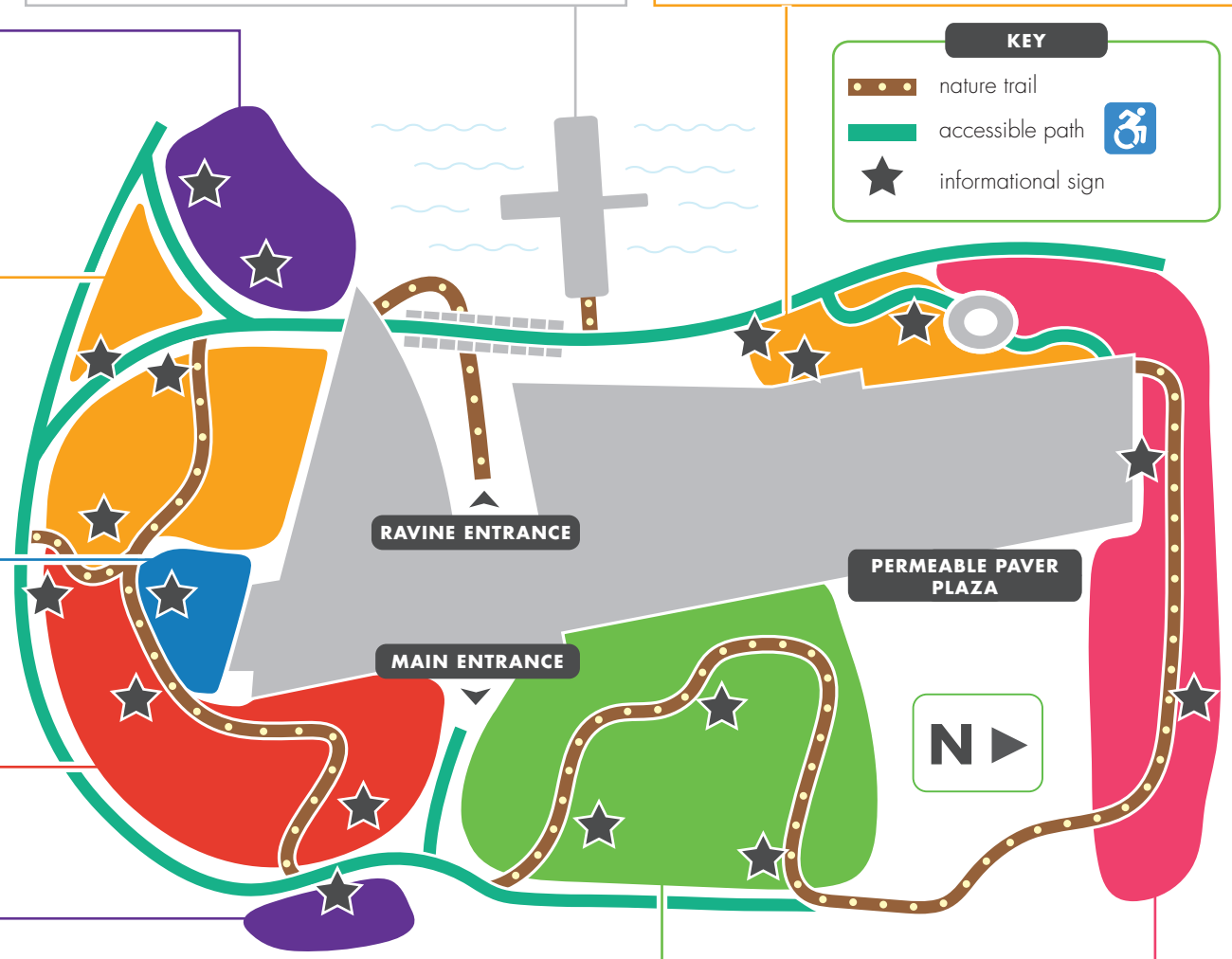
The edible plants in this garden—onions, herbs, tomatoes, and more—grow well in the Chicago area. Our horticulturists start planting seeds in the early spring and keep the harvest going all through the growing season.

NORTH POND OBSERVATION PIER

The pier overlooks the North Pond Nature Sanctuary, a vibrant wetland right in the middle of Lincoln Park. It is a vantage point for the over 200 resident and migratory bird species, the 100 native plant species and the thousands of insects, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians that live here year-round.

WOODY WICKHAM BUTTERFLY GARDEN

The flowers in this garden provide nectar to butterflies, other insects, and birds that are attracted by the flowers' bright colors and scents. This garden also contains host plants, or specific plants on which butterflies will lay their eggs.



KEY

- nature trail
- accessible path
- informational sign

RAVINE ENTRANCE

MAIN ENTRANCE

PERMEABLE PAVER PLAZA

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BLACK OAK SAND SAVANNA

In a savanna, trees (in this case, black oak trees) grow scattered among the grasses and wildflowers. The plants in the Black Oak Sand Savanna are growing in sandy soil that was once a sand dune on Lake Michigan's shore.

PARKLAND

This parkland has a traditional lawn area and many scattered shade trees. Several bird feeders attract birds and squirrels to this area.

how to use your nature trails guide

Use the map to find signs around Nature Trails with more information about each habitat. The placement of each sign is marked with a star (★) on the map. These signs will provide facts about the living things in each area and can be used as field guides for identifying what you observe.

★ DON'T WORRY ABOUT BEING ABLE TO IDENTIFY EVERYTHING YOU SEE

Visiting the outdoor space is about making careful observations, comparisons, and connections. If necessary, prompt students with questions, such as:

"What else do you notice this looks like?"

"Why do you think you see this happening here?"

"Where have you seen something like this before?"

★ PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A GENERAL FOCUS FOR EXPLORING THE OUTDOOR AREAS

Compare and contrast different habitats or observing various leaf shapes, but give them the freedom to enjoy their surroundings and make their own connections.

★ MODEL CAREFUL OBSERVATION SKILLS

Describe specific shapes, smells, and sounds and encourage students to make close observations.

★ PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVATION AND RESEARCH

Please do not allow students to remove natural objects (e.g. flowers, leaves, rocks, feathers) from the Nature Museum grounds, or feed or chase any animals.

★ ALLOW STUDENTS TO SHARE INTERESTING THINGS THAT THEY OBSERVE

Either facilitate a group discussion or have them complete a post-visit activity back in the classroom.

★ TOUR THE MUSEUM GROUNDS ALL YEAR – NO MATTER THE SEASON

Many living things remain active in Chicago throughout the entire year.

Please return this guide back to the Front Desk no later than 45 minutes after check out.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Chicago Park District on behalf of the citizens of Chicago.

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SCIENCES

PEGGY NOTEBAERT
NATURE
MUSEUM