

North Park Village Nature Center is the largest city-owned natural area on the north side of Chicago. It is part of an extensive network of natural areas in this part of the city, including the high quality prairies and savannas along the North Branch of the Chicago River that are owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (sites 13, p. 44; 22, p. 53; 25, p. 35; 35, p. 67; and 98, p. 36). Extensive year-round nature programming is offered at the site, both for children and adults.

Once farmland, the 150-acre area was purchased by the City and converted to a tuberculosis sanitarium in 1911. In 1974 the sanitarium was closed, and today North Park Village's buildings are used for senior housing, government buildings, and a gymnasium.

About a third of the property is still in its natural condition. Restoration work is ongoing, with an active volunteer stewardship group that has regular workdays throughout the year. In late winter, the park district hosts a maple syrup festival.

Visits begin at the Nature Center, which has a map of the preserve and volunteer nature docents who answer questions and give tours.

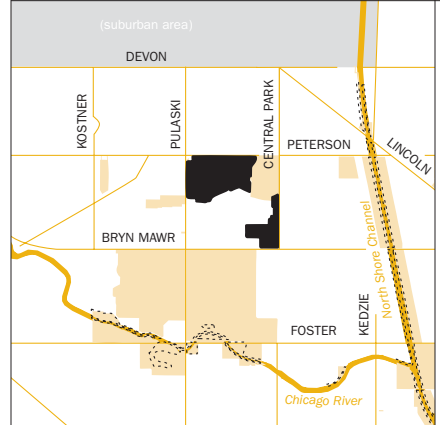
There's a main trail that loops around the entire area, and three shorter trails through three habitats: the oak savanna **1**, woodlands **2**, and wetlands **8** **9**. The main loop and oak savanna trails can be accessed by walking through the Nature Center and out the back of the building.

The oak savanna is filled with bur and white oaks, and the understory is rich with native grasses and flowers. The woodland is dominated by maples of all ages, which makes this trail particularly beautiful during the fall season.

To the east are the pond and wetlands. Wood ducks, geese, painted turtles, and deer are frequent inhabitants; raccoons, foxes, bullfrogs, kingfishers, crayfish, and great blue herons are sometimes found. There is a bench on the water's edge next to a sugar maple for prolonged viewing and animal searching, and an observational area raised up from the Main Loop trail about half way along the wetlands.

NORTH PARK VILLAGE
NATURE CENTER

Site No 60

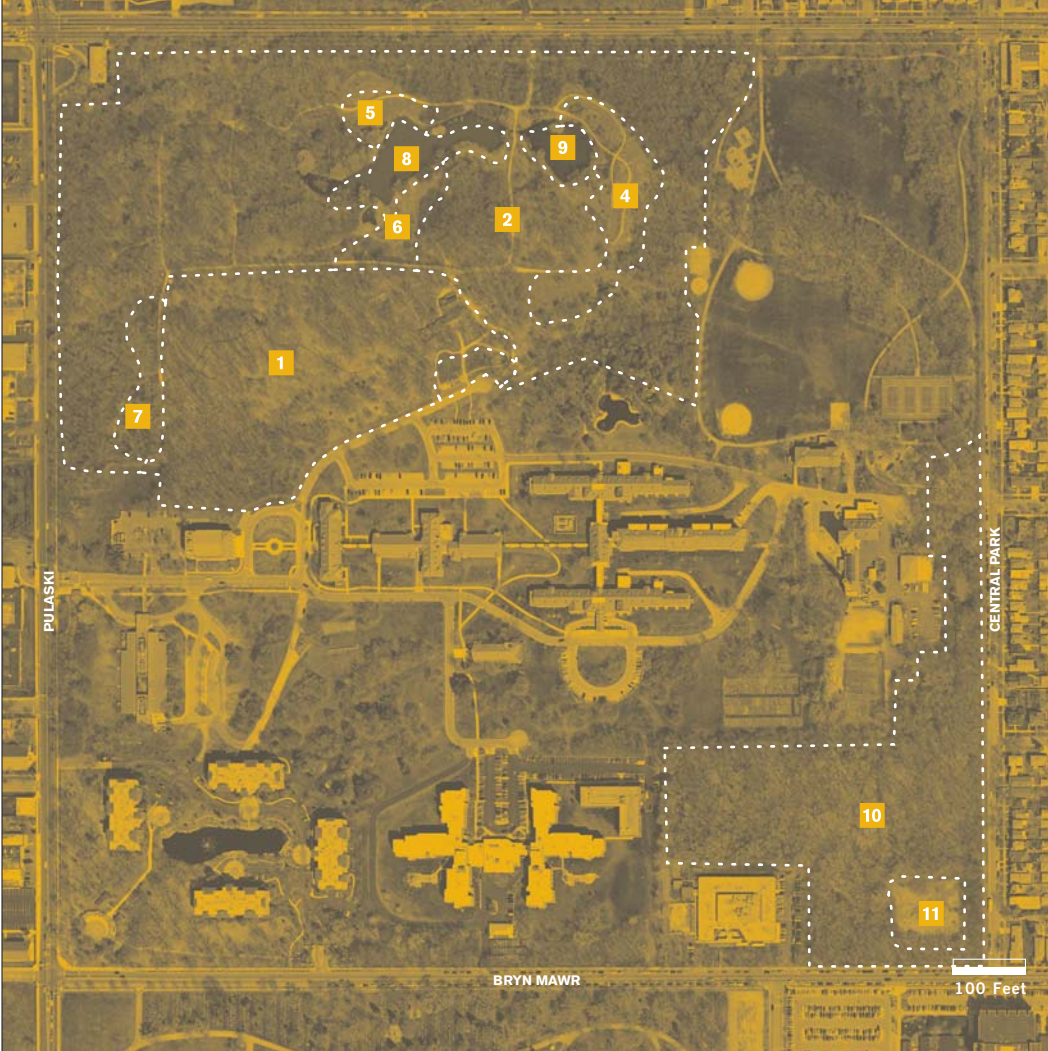


5800 NORTH / 3800 WEST



**North Park Village
Nature Center**

Nº 60



ADDRESS 5801 N Pulaski Rd
OWNER Chicago Park District
ACREAGE 57.61

HABITATS
1 Savanna
2 10 Forest / Woodland
3 4 5 6 Prairie / Grassland
7 11
8 9 Wetland

DIRECTIONS The entrance to North Park Village is at Pulaski and Ardmore, just south of Peterson Avenue. Follow signs to the Nature Center.

North Park Village Nature Center

Chicago Habitat Directory 2005

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