

CATHERINE CHEVALIER WOODS FOREST PRESERVE

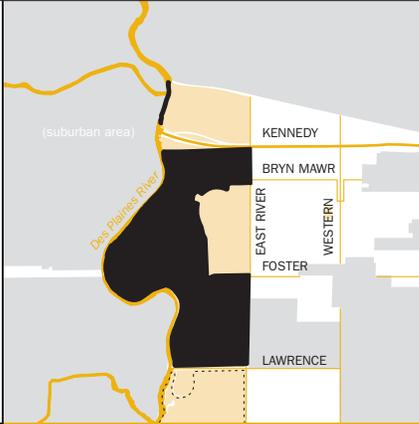
Catherine Chevalier Woods is significant both in and of itself—it's a large natural area with good quality woodland—but it is also important as a one-mile link along the Des Plaines River greenway. The Des Plaines River is approximately 150 miles long; much of its southern stretch is protected by the Lake County Forest Preserve District and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County owns a total of 8,137 acres land along the Des Plaines River (both inside and outside city limits).

The central part of Catherine Chevalier Woods consists of parking lots surrounded by meadows. The meadows range from those that are closely mowed for picnics and recreation, and those that are left lightly mowed or unmowed. Some of the unmowed meadows support native prairie vegetation. Much of the oak and hickory woods are open in character, allowing sunlight to support the growth of flowers and grasses in the understory.

The floodplain forest community lies closest to the banks of the Des Plaines, with remnant prairie vegetation farther east. In presettlement times, bur oaks were the dominant tree species. Beneath the oaks, native wildflowers such as wood anemone, toothwort, and spring beauties can be found blooming in April and May.

The grazing of a heavy deer population inhibits the success of native understory plants, however. This is the most reliable place to go within the city of Chicago if you want to see white-tailed deer. (Though many of the suburban forest preserves have deer populations that are as great or greater.)

Just north of Lawrence off of River Road is an Indian cemetery that contains the graves of Alexander Robinson also known as Chief Chee-Chee-Pin-Quay (Chief of the Potawatomi, Chippewa and Ottawa Indian tribes) and family.



Catherine Chevalier Woods Forest Preserve



ADDRESS 8800 W Lawrence Ave
 OWNER Forest Preserve District of Cook County
 ACREAGE 338.13

HABITATS
 1 Forest/Woodland
 2 3 Riparian/Water Edge

DIRECTIONS Enter the east side of Catherine Chevalier Woods between the Kennedy Expressway (I-90) and Catalpa Street on East River Road. Walking down Lawrence, the street bisecting the forest preserves from east to west, prairie openings with blazing stars and Indian grass can be visited.

