

A Self Guiding Tour



Franklin's Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium passerinum*)

of the

Turtle Lake Nature Sanctuary

A large botanical illustration of a Franklin's Lady's Slipper (Cypripedium passerinum) with a decorative wreath of leaves and berries. The illustration is detailed, showing the plant's leaves, stem, and the characteristic pouch of the flower.

LAKE SANCTUARY

Turtle Lake is distinctive and bountiful for its diversity of plants, animals and birds. The boreal/mixed woods forest meets a lakeshore ecology. Glacial crevasse filling left behind rolling topography and a variety of soils: this occurs when lobes of glacial ice advance & retreat in different directions. Over time, these soils were colonized by plants, which in turn attracted many species of animals and birds.

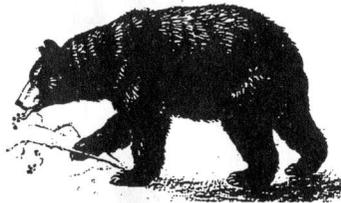
Be sure to bring binoculars and a bird checklist to increase your enjoyment. FIELD GUIDES may be signed out at the store.

Birds sing from May-July, and many are quiet after that. **This is your trail. Open fires and the picking of wild flowers is not permitted.**

First, check your map. Trails are for FOOTTRAFFIC ONLY except for foot/bicycles where indicated. Access points are labeled as A, B, C; numbers indicate something of interest. Trail "A" originates at our parking lot and provides several options for observing nature. Trail "B" originates at Turtle Lake Lodge as a walk along the lakeshore. Trail "C" follows the power cutline through wet to dry elevations to provide an ever-changing habitat.

How to access Trail "A": Begin at the Access Driveway. Study the map for a moment. If you follow the trail to the west, you will reach the gravel pit that is being reclaimed as wildlife habitat. The frog pond will be completed first. Then little houses will be placed to attract species of both birds and mammals (bats and flying squirrels love houses too). There are several trails that lead to other points of interest. 45 minutes.

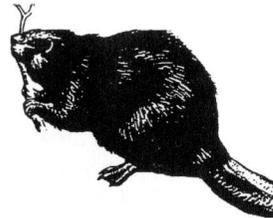
ALWAYS BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR BEARS. IN SUMMER, FEMALES WITH CUBS ARE ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS. IF A BEAR HAS BEEN REPORTED, DO NOT TRAVEL ALONE. MAKE NOISES AS YOU WALK



How to access Trail "B": From the store, walk south behind the first row of cottages until you reach the fence. Cross over the footbridge and follow the signs to the right. Take the footpath toward the beach to view shore birds on the sandpit, or follow the trail to your left. Then cross a dry streambed and find some of the most rare and beautiful flowers of the forest. They are at their best in June. Proceed along the trail to the cutline to a mature boreal forest. You are now officially on the Sanctuary.

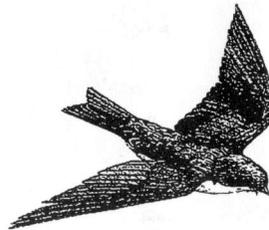
the water. Binoculars are handy to scan for birds in the cattail beds below. Spruce Island is visible to the northwest and Indian Point to the southwest. Beavers harvested the aspens here 20 years ago. Regrowth is mostly berry and hazelnut bushes, ideal habitat for songbirds.

If you are quiet, you may see and hear nesting birds. Watch for deer and small mammals.



Next, the trail meets the wide "Beaver Trail." You can return to the Lodge, or proceed south to the Airstrip. You may hear woodpeckers and tree swallows, and listen for Rose Breasted Grosbeaks. If you return on this trail, you will reach the Strawberry Meadow where grassland species of plants grow. An archaeological site 3500 years old was found here.

Our first people enjoyed the beauty of this location too. Listen and look for rare warblers and vireos in early summer. The trail continues past a picket fence and back to Turtle Lake Lodge. 45 minutes.



How to Access Point "C": From Indian Point you reach the southwest corner of the sanctuary beside the airstrip. You have

2 choices: go north on the Beaver Trail or follow the power cutline east. Signs will direct you.

One sign indicates a trail beside the sanctuary that is **THE ONLY TRAIL FOR ALL TERRAIN VEHICLES**. Hikers on this trail should be alert for ATV's.



Swing east along the power cutline, and see the gentle change in elevation as you leave the lake. The soil is very damp near the lake, and becomes much drier further east. Plants reflect these changes like a cross-section of the forest. Here, flowers can bloom in sequence because the land must be kept accessible for emergencies. The trail continues east then north to the parking lot. This is a good place to explore the forest for mushrooms in July/August, find butterflies and moths and taste the berries. 60 minutes.

GUIDED NATURE WALKS BEGIN AT THE STORE EVERY SATURDAY MORNING AT 10 AM WHEN POSSIBLE.

one of the most recognizable flowers.

In May, violets, Solomon's Seal and Marsh Marigolds. By June 15, the first orchids appear. These rare plants are protected. By late June, our Provincial flower, the Western Red Lily appears, along with Franklin's Lady Slipper and wild roses. In July, Indian Paintbrush, Grass of Parnassus, pink gentians and Hooded Lady's Tresses are easy to find. In August, look for goldenrod and asters.

The following NUMBERED sites on the map are flagged. Each represents a specific habitat or unique point of interest.

Stop #1: Mixed wood understory. In June, see Early and Striped Coralroots and Bishop's Cap. Listen for Western Tanagers, Blackburnian and Cape May Warblers singing from the tops of spruce. Check out the boreal understory for flowers. HAVE A FLOWER BOOK HANDY.



Stop #2: An opening in the forest just before the cutline junction: see Franklin's and Yellow Lady's Slippers beside the trail. Ferns, twinflower, starflower and bunchberry create the forest understory below Sarsaparilla and Horsetail.

Stop #3: The Viewpoint. Binoculars are great to scan the

shoreline. Relax on the benches provided, and watch for terns, grebes, blackbirds and ducks in the cattails and rushes. Listen for loons and Western Grebes calling. Great Blue Herons and Osprey nest on Spruce Island but often fish here. During spring and fall migrations, 20 species of warblers can be found. Watch for Redstarts and Connecticut Warblers. Here the understory is Sarsaparilla, Bog Cranberry and Kinnikinnick. Look for Saskatoon, chokecherry, pincherry, blueberry and hazelnuts all around you. About 100 M south there is another sheltered rest spot surrounded by spruce trees.

**THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF NATURE
SASKATCHEWAN MEMBERS AND LOCAL
RESIDENTS, THE TURTLE LAKE NATURE
SANCTUARY BECAME A REALITY IN 1994, TO
PRESERVE A "POCKET" OF NATURAL BEAUTY
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY.**

Stop #4: Several trails come together. You can go south to the airstrip, east to the gravel pit, or return to the Lodge along the Beaver Trail. While you choose, listen and look for Ruffed Grouse, White Throated Sparrows, Juncos, and Yellow Rumped Warblers. Refer to the bird Checklist and check off those you locate.

Stop #5: The Powerline/Orchid Trail is best for flowers. Six orchids and 5 wintergreens bloom here. Raspberries are everywhere. Look for Canada Buffaloberry (but don't eat it). There are lots of fallen logs with wonderful growths of mosses and lichens on them. This is great place to photograph.



Stop #6: The Strawberry Meadow. Bluebells, yarrow, pussytoes and other grassland species bloom here among the strawberries. It's a great place to LISTEN for bird songs. Even in winter, ravens, jays, woodpeckers, grosbeaks and chickadees are here.

Stop #7: A narrow, winding trail begins just beyond power Pole #5 and enters the gravel pit 400 metres north. A small clump of Spotted Coralroot grows here beside a certain tree (marked). There are lots of blueberries, saskatoons, dewberries and strawberries. This is a "nurse" forest with deciduous trees that form a canopy while spruce slowly grow to succeed them.

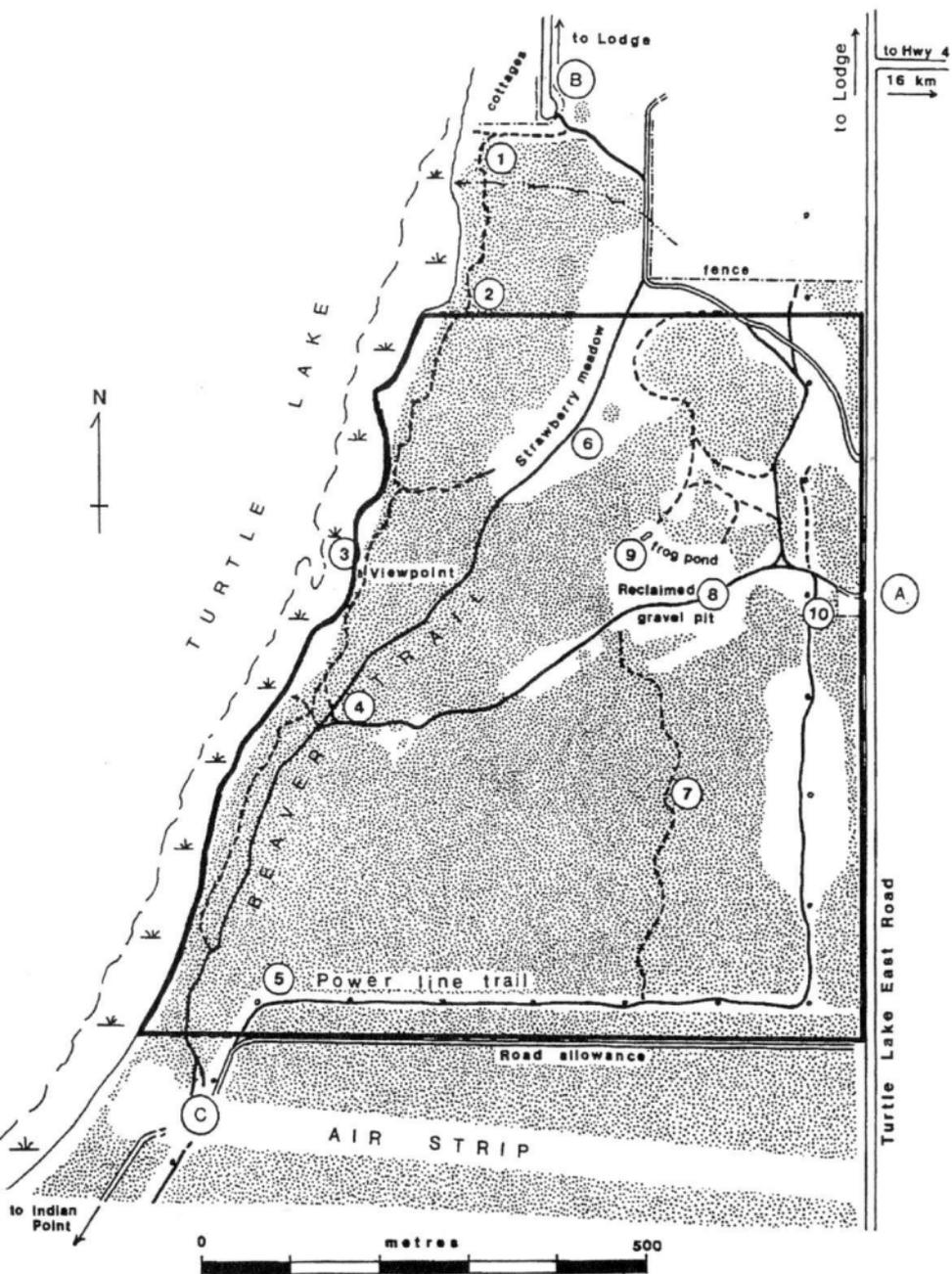
Stop #8: The gravel pit is being reclaimed as habitat. Willows and black poplar are well established. A stand of black poplar at the east end of the pit has ugly black scars down the trunks. They are victims of the poplar borer, an insect that attacks forests after periods of drought. Hundreds of trees are already dead, so BEWARE OF FALLING TREES ALONG THE TRAILS ON WINDY DAYS.

Stop #9: The frog pond was created during gravel operations when they reached a natural seep. Work to restore this pond is ongoing, so be careful: the banks are soft and the water may be deep. Look for tadpoles. Ducks come here when the waves on the lake are too high. Approach this spot QUIETLY: you may see some birds or animals having a drink. Cattails and pondweeds will keep the water fresh.



Stop #10: The Sanctuary parking lot. A "witches broom" or dwarf mistletoe is growing on a jackpine beside the road. Mistletoes are parasitic. They live off the host plant and direct the tree to branch at the tip, a condition that makes the wood useless for commercial lumber.

his sanctuary is for everyone. So leave noisy vehicles behind and rediscover the beauty of nature. If you wish more information, contact Nature Saskatchewan, Rm 206, 1860 Lorne St, Regina, S4P 2L7. You may call our 1-800-667-4668 number anytime. Enjoy your trip to Turtle Lake.



Trees	Marsh	Power line poles
Foot/bicycle path	Footpath	ATV trail

