

A Tour of Southern Wisconsin State Natural Areas (SNAs) Webinar

Q&A with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

May 8, 2020

Q: What is a State Natural Area?

State natural areas (SNAs) protect outstanding examples of Wisconsin's native landscape of natural communities, significant geological formations and archeological sites. They also provide some of the last refuges for rare plants and animals.

Q: In what areas (or what activities) do you most need volunteers?

Our needs vary based on season and region. The best thing to do would be to start a conversation with SNA volunteer coordinator Jared Urban via email at Jared.urban@wisconsin.gov. Please let him know where you live and if you have any interests.

Q: What kind of waivers are you using for volunteers during COVID?

For the time being, we are not scheduling any volunteer workdays under the Safer at Home period. Stay tuned to the SNA Volunteer website for updates.

Q: Are people allowed to leave the trails?

Yes, visitors are not restricted to trails unless posted as such. Most SNAs do not have designated trails, merely footpaths.

Q: Have Hines Emerald dragonfly been noted at LuLu Lake? It seems like a potential favorable habitat.

HED has not been located at Lulu to our knowledge.

Q: Jared, can you talk a bit more about the plant species that you mentioned are found at Maiden Rock Bluff, that are more typically found further west?

Western spp include prairie larkspur and plains muhly grass. Yes, spp more indicative of shortgrass prairie.

Q: Are the parking areas marked with DNR/SNA signs?

Yes, the designated parking lots are marked with DNR and State Natural Area property signs. It's also OK to park on the roadside, if it can be done safely. Some SNAs don't have parking lots.

Q: (Referring to Blue River Bluffs SNA section) What is wrong with how it has changed since the 1940 photo? Why try to restore it to that?

Those bluffs were historically covered with open prairie. With the suppression of fire post-settlement, trees grew on the prairies and shaded out the diverse prairie flora. The intent is to restore it to these "pre-settlement" times by removing the invading trees and using fire to help restore it.

Q: I am an 8th grader joining for #Fieldtripfriday. I just want to ask why the presentation only has flowers and plants and not any animals.

Thanks for joining us! Jared is more of a botanist (plant guy) than a zoologist (animal guy), so he's focusing on vegetation. 😊