

This loop trail of two and a half miles begins at a small opening in the fence just south of the parking lot. Follow yellow paint blazes on trees.

#### Wilderness Preserve sign post

#1 The Wilderness Preserve honors Charlie Eulett. Charlie, an Adams County teacher, shared his love of prairies and woodlands with local residents and advocated the protection of these areas--a progressive idea in the 1960s and 1970s.

#2 Downslope from the trail flows Saw Mill Branch; aptly named, as the young mixed woodland here followed cutting by a small timber mill that operated nearby during the 1970s. Compare the forest on your right with that above Saw Mill Branch on your left. The dry, south-facing forest above consists of chestnut oak, black gum and tulip tree with an understory of seedlings. Below, the forest just above the Branch faces north, and remains moist, shaded and more open, dotted with beech, sugar maple and tulip tree.

#3 As you leave Saw Mill Branch and head west you pass above the northwest-flowing Cliff Run. Take note of the interesting evergreen stand here. This tree, the white cedar, characterizes the globally rare White Cedar Bluff Woodland plant community. The largest individuals stand near the cliff's edge below, growing in downed timber estimated at 500 years of age. These cliff-dwelling sentinels have survived for centuries, seeding areas upslope with "dog hair" thickets of young trees. Compare the smooth, flattened leaves of the white cedar with the prickly foliage of its cousin the red cedar. Please stay on the trail to avoid unnecessary impact on this very rare forest.

#4 Walk carefully where the trail skirts the cliff's edge, however beautiful and distracting the views of the forest below. The land below has slipped, creating a boulder-strewn, bowl-shaped depression, strewn with large-flowered trillium and hepatica in spring. Warblers of many species are easily viewed in season from your treetop vantage. The line of cliffs above the trail is Peebles Dolomite indented with the fossil remains of stony sponges and early corals. Small-flowered sunflower is common in late summer at the trail's edge.

#5 This section of the trail was a historic wagon route in the early 1900s, when the forest would have been recently cleared but had grown back with remarkable vigor. Look for two shrubs that dominate this section of the trail, spice-bush and paw paw. Search the spice-bush in late spring and summer for folded leaves containing caterpillars of a butterfly, the spice-bush swallowtail. The paw paw also hosts butterfly larvae, those of the zebra swallowtail. Both shrubs have distinctive odors when bruised: one smells fruity and the other smells like green peppers.

Watch for the sharp right-hand turn in the trail, marked with a double yellow paint blazes.

#6 You now walk along the base of the dolomite cliffs above--don't forget to look up! Here the trail marks the contact point between dolomite and Crab Orchard Shale bedrock. At this seam, water percolating through the dolomite above is squeezed out in numerous springs as it reaches the impermeable clay soils. Tall boneset, cowbane and eastern box turtles mark these springs in late summer. Mud on your shoes is a good indicator of clayey soils any time of year.

#7 This section of the trail is good for spring wildflower viewing. Flowers abound on the forest floor and on small fern-draped boulders. Wild ginger forms low mats and is accompanied by stunning taller displays of twinleaf. Wild geranium and green violet, an unusual member of the violet family, accent the displays in early to late spring. The sharp-eyed winter hiker may locate the rock near the cliff's top whose shape has earned it the name of "the pistol grip".

#8 After crossing the bridge you enter a magnificent white oak forest on Crab Orchard Shale crossed by seasonal streams. Follow the trail downhill to Bread Pan Run for views of the Ohio Brush Creek Valley. Just beyond the distant tree line, preserve staff have planted half a mile of stream frontage with trees to protect this high-quality watercourse.

#9 The trail leaves Bread Pan Run and ascends through a young forest dominated by eastern red cedar, Virginia pine, and tulip tree. These trees and the forest's scrubby nature reflect the land's past use for pasture and row crops. A species of woodland grass, bearded short-husk, grows at trail's edge.

#10 You now enter a spectacular forest of sugar maple and Chinquapin oak, scattered with enormous blocks of dolomite that have tumbled from the cliffs above. These boulders are festooned with wild hydrangea, wild ginger and columbine in spring, and zigzag goldenrod and jumpseed in late summer. Walking fern can be found year round, some with offshoots growing from fronds' ends. This tactic of cloning itself has given the fern its name and allows it to colonize its vertical habitat. Scarlet tanagers and migrating warblers abound in spring. Turkey vultures nest in the many shallow overhangs in the cliff above. When disturbed they may fly quietly from the nest, or may remain at the nest and engage in projectile vomiting. The latter habit keeps human visitation near the nests to a minimum.

#11 Anywhere along this stretch of trail you may find the supple-branched shrub leatherwood and its neighbor the bladdernut. In spring, yellow lady's slippers steal the show, along with jack-in-

the-pulpit, black snakeroot and bellwort. Don't forget to look up at the serpentine line of cliffs beside the trail. Red efts, the larval land stage of the red-spotted newt, also use the trail in spring and fall.

#12 Stay alert at the wooden bridge, as minks, raccoons, and opossums often leave scat piles here. Mink scat is thin and tapered and sometimes contains hair, whereas the others are short and rounded and usually contain seeds.

#13 At two small footbridges you come to an example of stream piracy. The two streams running under these bridges used to be one, a watercourse flowing to the east. That stream's drainage pattern was changed and its flow reversed, creating two streams that subsequently created Bread Pan Gorge downstream of the bridges. This gorge is deep, providing habitat for Louisiana waterthrushes and excellent spring wildflower displays.

#14 You now enter Shivener Prairie, formerly Floyd Shivener's corn patch. This area has been colonized by prairie species typical of Adams County. In spring the flower display is subtle, with golden alexander, rue anemone, and Seneca snakeroot. The real show comes in summer, with purple blazing star, tall coreopsis, western sunflower, flowering spurge and obedient plant. One of the rarest plants here is the diminutive limestone adder's-tongue fern. Look for its small frond in early summer along the trail's edge. The baby-blue flowers of the shale-barren aster appear in early fall along with the creamy white flowers of the Great Plains ladies' tresses. Continue on the trail through the woods to the old Shivener house site. Follow the lane up the slope to the parking lot.