



# STORY IDEAS

## The Indiana Dunes

### THE INDIANA DUNES

Indiana Dunes Lakeshore is now the nation's 61st national park—the Indiana Dunes National Park. Within the boundaries of the 15,000-acre national park is the 2,182-acre State Park. Together, they are the Indiana Dunes, one of the most biodiverse regions in North America. The Indiana Dunes has beaches, prairies, wetlands, savannas, and forests, which are home to over 1,000 native plant species and 350 resident and migrating bird species. The dunes, which are massive hills of sand reaching nearly 200 feet in height, were formed when glaciers passed through the area over 10,000 years ago.

The Indiana Dunes is Indiana's number one tourist destination, attracting more than three million visitors annually. As a premier family-friendly vacation getaway, it has one of the nation's five best beaches for family fun according to Parents Magazine. Its 15 miles of beaches and over 70 miles of trails offer a wide array of opportunities for splashing and playing, as well as amazing views of Chicago's skyline and hikes up ancient sand dunes.

The Indiana Dunes area offers many outdoor experiences, including swimming, birding, biking, camping, hiking, fishing, and other natural adventures, along with fine dining and local attractions. Its downtown communities are complete with affordable accommodations and Midwest hospitality, ensuring each getaway is a trip to remember.

- [The National Park was chosen as one of the "Top 10 Urban Escapes" by National Geographic](#)
- [Geographic, and Frommer's named Indiana among the world's top places to visit in 2020.](#)

### DUNES 101 VIDEO SERIES

The five video series follows "Ranger" Matt on an adventure through the area. The videos are posted on Indiana Dunes Tourism's YouTube channel and blog. Each orients visitors and explores interesting facts about different aspects of the Indiana Dunes, such as the beach experience, camping, and hiking:

- [What Are the Indiana Dunes?—Dunes 101: Orientation](#)
- [Where Are the Indiana Dunes Beaches?—Dunes 101: Beach Experience](#)
- [Where to Camp in the Indiana Dunes?—Dunes 101: Camping](#)
- [Where to Hike in the Indiana Dunes—Dunes 101: Hiking](#)
- [Interesting Things About the Indiana Dunes—Dunes 101: Did You Know?](#)

Visit [youtube.com/user/indianadunescountry](https://youtube.com/user/indianadunescountry) to learn more.

### THE 3 DUNE CHALLENGE

Challenge yourself, your friends, and your family to climb the three tallest sand dunes at Indiana Dunes State Park. The self-guided 1.5-mile challenge trail is the toughest in the area, with 552 vertical feet to climb. The reward: breathtaking views and the title of dunes conqueror. Start your adventure at the Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center or learn more at [indianadunes.com/3dc](https://indianadunes.com/3dc).



# OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

## BICYCLING

Whether your passion is mountain biking, BMX stunts, or leisure touring, the Indiana Dunes area has a biking experience for you. There are nearly 40 miles of trails in the National Park alone, offering a range of remarkable views of Lake Michigan or rough and ready mountain bike experiences. With the new South Shore Bikes on Trains program, it's never been easier to ride your bike to and from the Indiana Dunes area, Chicago, and South Bend.

- This year, Indiana Dunes Tourism will be rolling out a new bike tour through the Indiana Dunes area.
- Creekside Park has a new intermediate-level mountain biking trail inside of a multi-use trail system with over five miles of soft surface corridors for biking, hiking, and walking.

## BIRDING

Enthusiasts who bird the world have been known to call the Indiana Dunes the "crème de la crème." Due to Lake Michigan, more than 350 bird species live or migrate through the area, resulting in spectacular migrations that let you see thousands of Sandhill Cranes in a single fall day or hundreds of hawks soaring over the dunes in the spring.

## NEW LEADS

### THE STATE PARK PAVILION

A 36-month public-private partnership renovation project between the Indiana Dunes State Park and Pavilion Partners will culminate with the restoration of the beautiful, historic Indiana Dunes State Park Pavilion. Established in 1930, this gem will feature event space, a pizza café, and an ice cream shop as well as amazing views of Lake Michigan and the Indiana Dunes from its rooftop.



## FISHING

The Indiana Dunes area offers great angling all year long. The area is home to sports fishing, great stream and river fishing, and plenty of dock and small lakes fishing. There's ice fishing in winter, and it's one of the few places in the world where you can fish for steelhead year-round, catch salmon in spring and fall, and still land a perch, trout, or sunfish for dinner.

## HIKING

Hiking in the Indiana Dunes area offers everything from a stroll in one of six botanic gardens/arboretums to a 15-mile trek along the dunes beach. More than 70 miles of hiking trails offer a variety of experiences from improved paths to natural sand trails. Hiking the Indiana Dunes area is an ideal way to experience a truly diverse natural habitat.

- Trail 9: this State Park trail was named one of the best scenic hiking trails in Indiana by USA Today.



## EVENTS

### Trash Trekkers Drop-In Volunteer Program

All year long  
[indianadunes.com/volunteer](http://indianadunes.com/volunteer)

**Indiana Dunes Birding Festival**  
Thursday, May 13–Sunday, May 17  
[indunesbirdingfestival.com](http://indunesbirdingfestival.com)

**Valparaiso Popcorn Festival**  
Saturday, Sept. 12  
[valparaisoevents.com](http://valparaisoevents.com)

**Outdoor Adventure Festival**  
Friday, Oct. 2–Sunday, Oct. 4  
[dunesoutdoorfestival.com](http://dunesoutdoorfestival.com)

## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Indiana Dunes Tourism launched its first international campaign this year in both France and Germany. The organization also offers 12 translated foreign language guides for international guests. Over the past few years, the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center has had over 100,000 visitors from all 50 states and over 50 international countries annually.

## PET-FRIENDLY CAMPAIGN

The Indiana Dunes is a pet-friendly destination, and leashed pets are allowed on trails at the State Park and National Park except for Glenwood Trail and Pinhook Bog. Restaurants, accommodations, and retail stores are also opening their doors to these four-legged, leashed travelers.

## GET IN TOUCH

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*Indiana Dunes Tourism is the official destination marketing, planning, and development organization for the Indiana Dunes area (Porter County, IN).*

