

GENEVA LAKE CONSERVANCY'S
PUBLIC NATURE PRESERVES

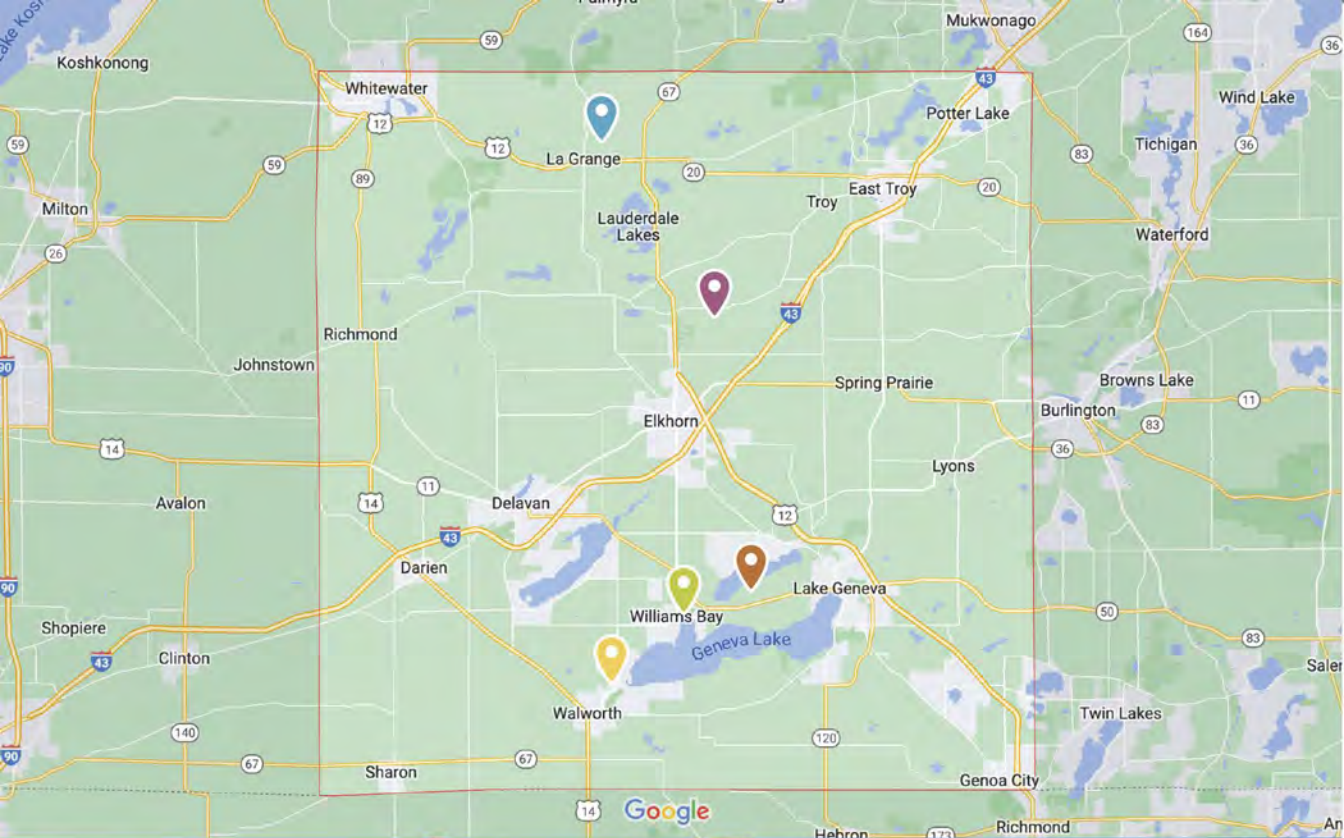
*The Exceptional Beauty
of Walworth County*

Explore



Geneva Lake
Conservancy

For more information visit www.genevalakeconservancy.org



Each nature preserve features a different landscape and trails to explore!

- 📍 **Bromley Woods** an oak woodland, oak savanna & kettle pond
- 📍 **Hansen Preserve** a restored creek habitat
- 📍 **Hermansen Woods** a mixed hardwood forest
- 📍 **Helen Rohner Children's Fishing Park** a restored wetland and upland
- 📍 **Mill House Native Plant Preserve & Hildebrand Conservancy** a beautiful native plant preserve with a trout stream feeding Geneva Lake



There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature — the assurance that dawn comes after night and spring after winter. — Rachel Carson

Welcome TO GENEVA LAKE CONSERVANCY'S PUBLIC NATURE PRESERVES

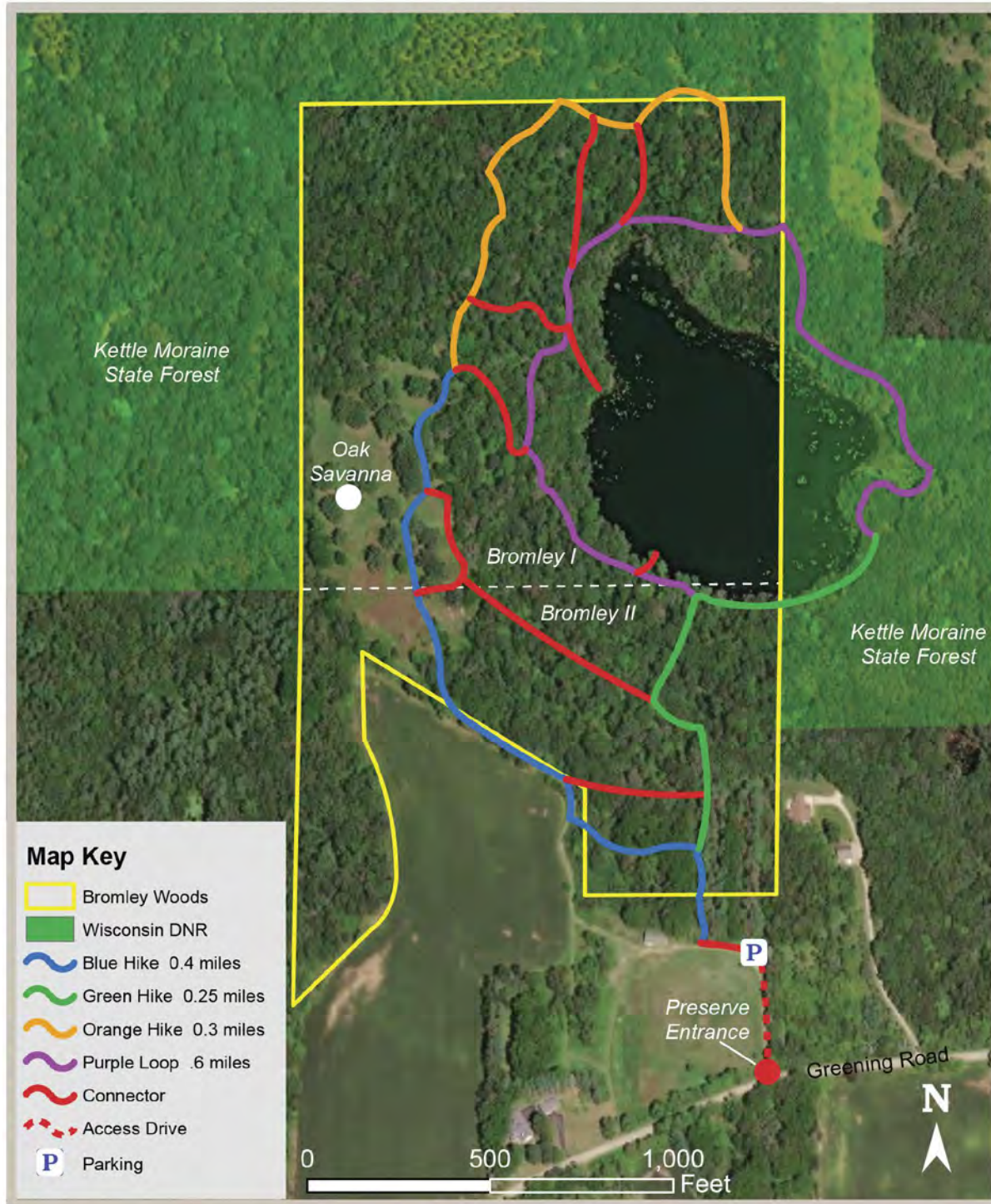
The lakes and lands of Walworth County have been gifted with extraordinary beauty and ecological health. Shaped by glaciers more than 10,000 years ago, the majority of Walworth County is part of the greater Kettle Moraine topography. The retreating glaciers left behind geological indentations known as kettles, some that became lakes, like Geneva Lake, and others that became 'kettle ponds' like you see at Bromley Woods preserve. The glaciers also deposited debris as they retreated — silt, sand and boulders. These formed varying shapes called kames (mounds), drumlins (hills made of glacial till) and eskers (a long ridge typically having a winding course).

As you explore the GLC nature preserves, you will see an abundance of plants and wildlife. Oak trees are a distinguishing feature of this landscape and provide habitat for over 500 species. You will see oak woodlands and oak savannas, the later a small group of mostly bur and white oak with more space in between them. Oak savannas have become one of the rarest landscapes on earth.

Whether you are on a family hike or hiking alone, we hope you'll feel the healing power of nature and join us in celebrating and nurturing the natural world — a world that is so important to preserve to provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife, to help slow climate change and to feed and restore the human spirit.

Bromley Woods

W5798 GREENING ROAD • WHITEWATER, WI



PARKING:
Gravel and grass parking lot provided off Greening Road

TRAILS:
Intermediate difficulty; Mowed with some steep hills

Map can be found on the All Trails app



Just 20 minutes from Lake Geneva, Bromley Woods in La Grange is the Geneva Lake Conservancy's "Signature" preserve. Owned by the same family since 1844, the 60-acre preserve (which will be expanded to 83 acres in 2022) features a 40-acre oak woodland and a beautiful oak savanna on its western edge. Well-maintained trails lead down from the oak-covered ridge to an 8-acre kettle pond that is habitat for newts, frogs and turtles as well as a variety of ducks and other waterfowl. The forest is alive with bird song in the morning and evening as the woodland is part of a globally important habitat for a variety of declining bird species, including several species of warblers. Hickory trees and other hardwoods attract many varieties of woodpeckers. Every other year, the Kettle Moraine Birding Festival is held on the property in early May.

The Conservancy is in the process of building a trail around the kettle pond in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, which owns the eastern shore. The property is adjacent to the Kettle Moraine State Park on three sides and near the Kettle Moraine State Park Nordic Trail, which can be reached from the northern edge of Bromley Woods, except in winter when the Nordic Trail is dedicated to cross-country skiers.

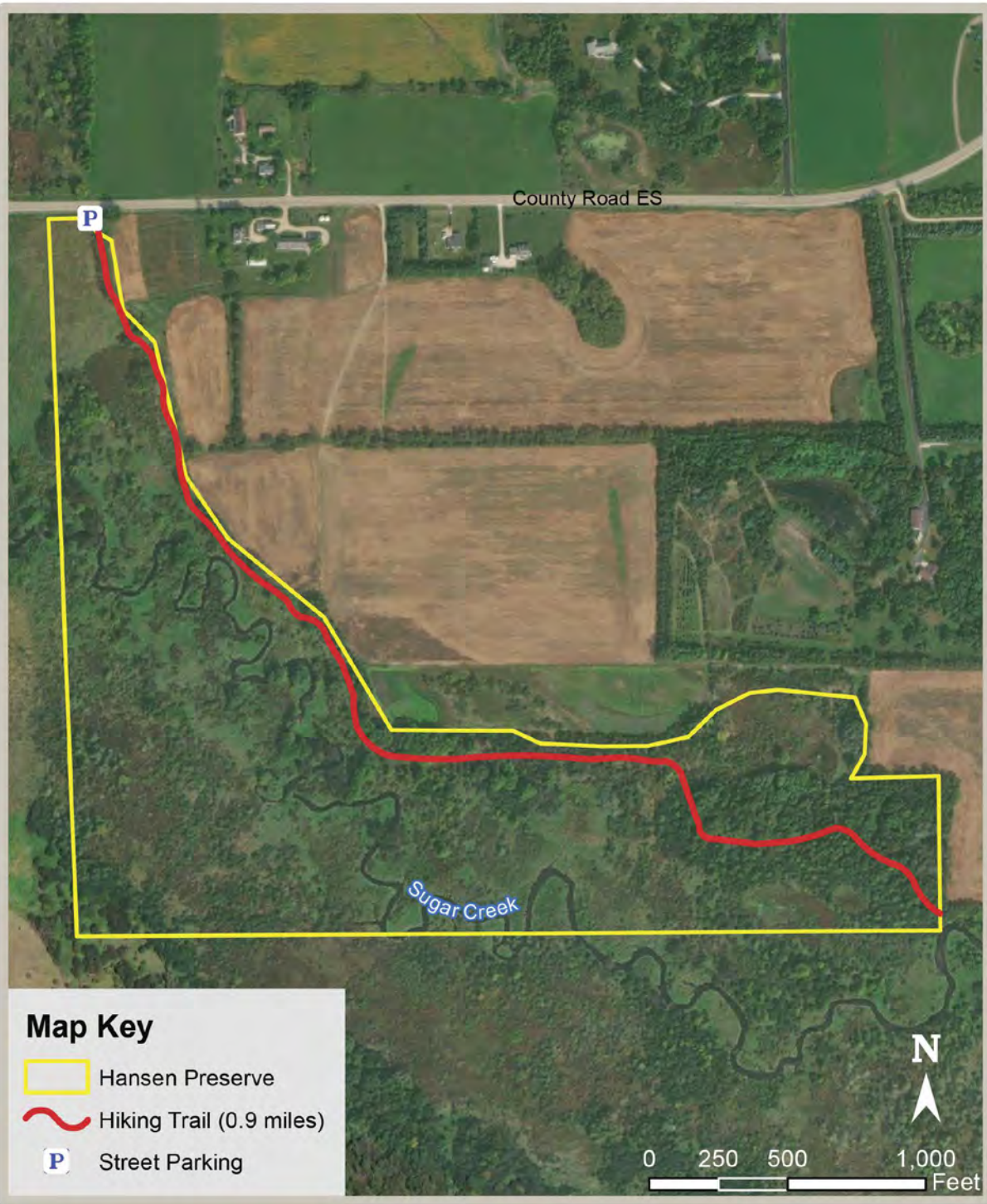
The property was purchased with funds from the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Fund and donations from private donors. It is open from sunrise to sunset,

Things you might see:

Wild geranium, jack-in-the-pulpit, warblers of many sorts!

Hansen Preserve

W4391 CTY HWY ES • ELKHORN, WI



PARKING:
Alongside Highway ES

TRAILS: 2 miles (1 mile each way)
Intermediate difficulty

Map can be found on the All Trails app

Along picturesque Sugar Creek, Hansen Preserve is located just north of Elkhorn. The creek meanders along the southern edge of the property and is a stream of local conservation significance as it contains the Least Darter, a state threatened ray-finned fish from the family Percidae, which also includes perch. A rock at the entrance to the creek details how the Potawatomi Native American tribe used to camp at a site along Sugar Creek to tap the maple trees and make maple sugar each spring as they journeyed through the area.

The one-mile trail can be flooded in spring and is best hiked in late summer, fall and winter. Boardwalks made by Eagle Scouts cover most of the flooded areas. The trail follows the path of the creek along the edge of a farm field. There are several smaller trails down to the bank of the creek. Arrows mark the main trail, which leads to an oak opening on high ground that contains bur and white oak.



The property was purchased with funds from the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Program, a grant from Ducks Unlimited and private donors.

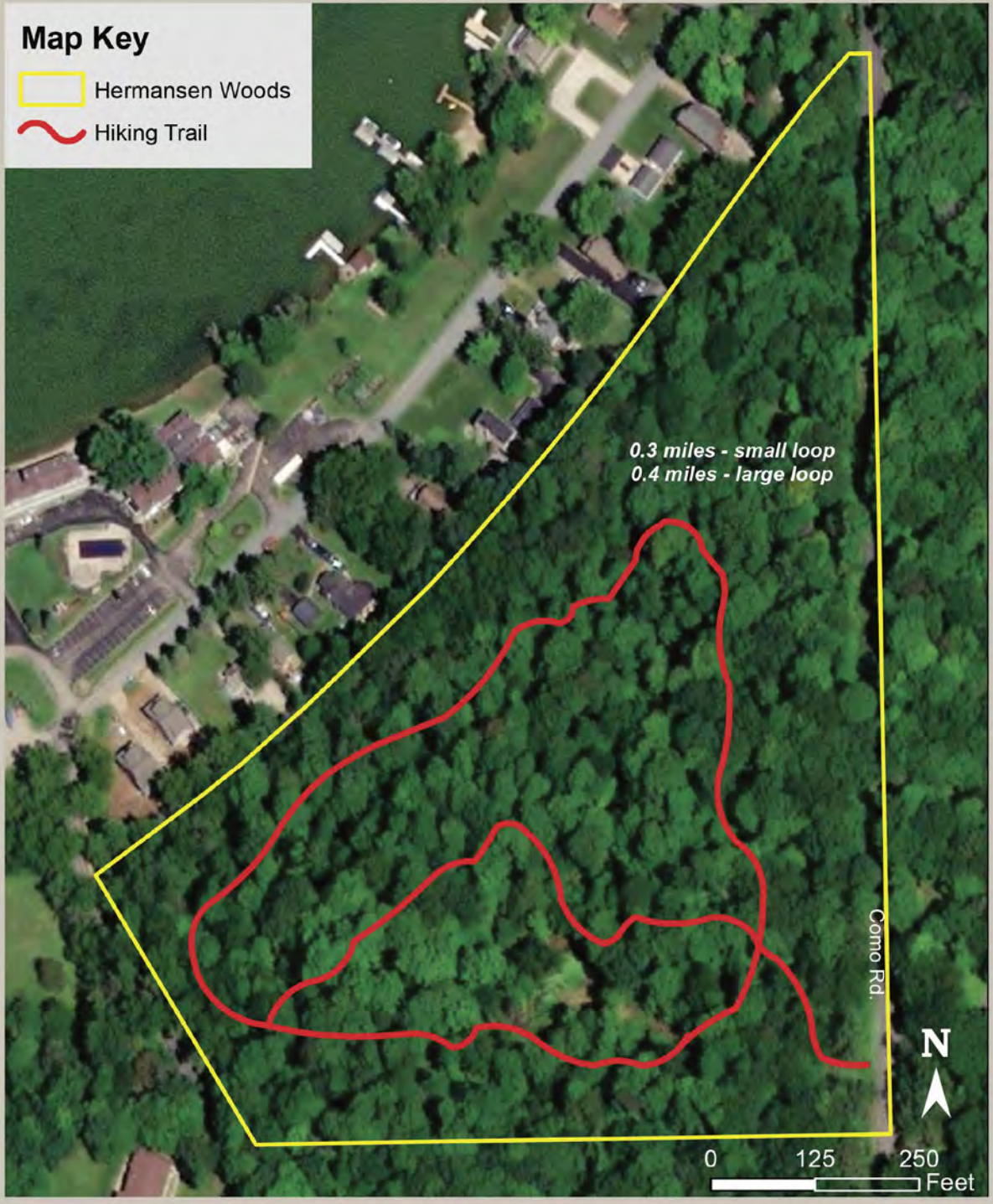


Things you might see:
Bur oak trees, meadowlark, least darter (fish), or bee balm

Hermansen Woods
SOUTH COMO ROAD • LAKE GENEVA, WI

Map Key

-  Hermansen Woods
-  Hiking Trail



PARKING:
On either side of South Como Road

TRAILS: 0.7 miles
Intermediate difficulty

Map can be found on the All Trails app



A restored mixed hardwood forest, Hermansen Woods features a ridge leading down to a high-quality wetland. The 15-acre property was donated to Geneva Lake Conservancy in 2000 by Allen Hermansen. The property was a former livestock farm, and over the years the Conservancy has worked with Midwest Prairies and funds provided by Mr. Hermansen to restore it to the forest that it was prior to European settlement. Invasive species like buckthorn and garlic mustard have been removed, oaks have been replanted and native woodland plants abound throughout the forest.

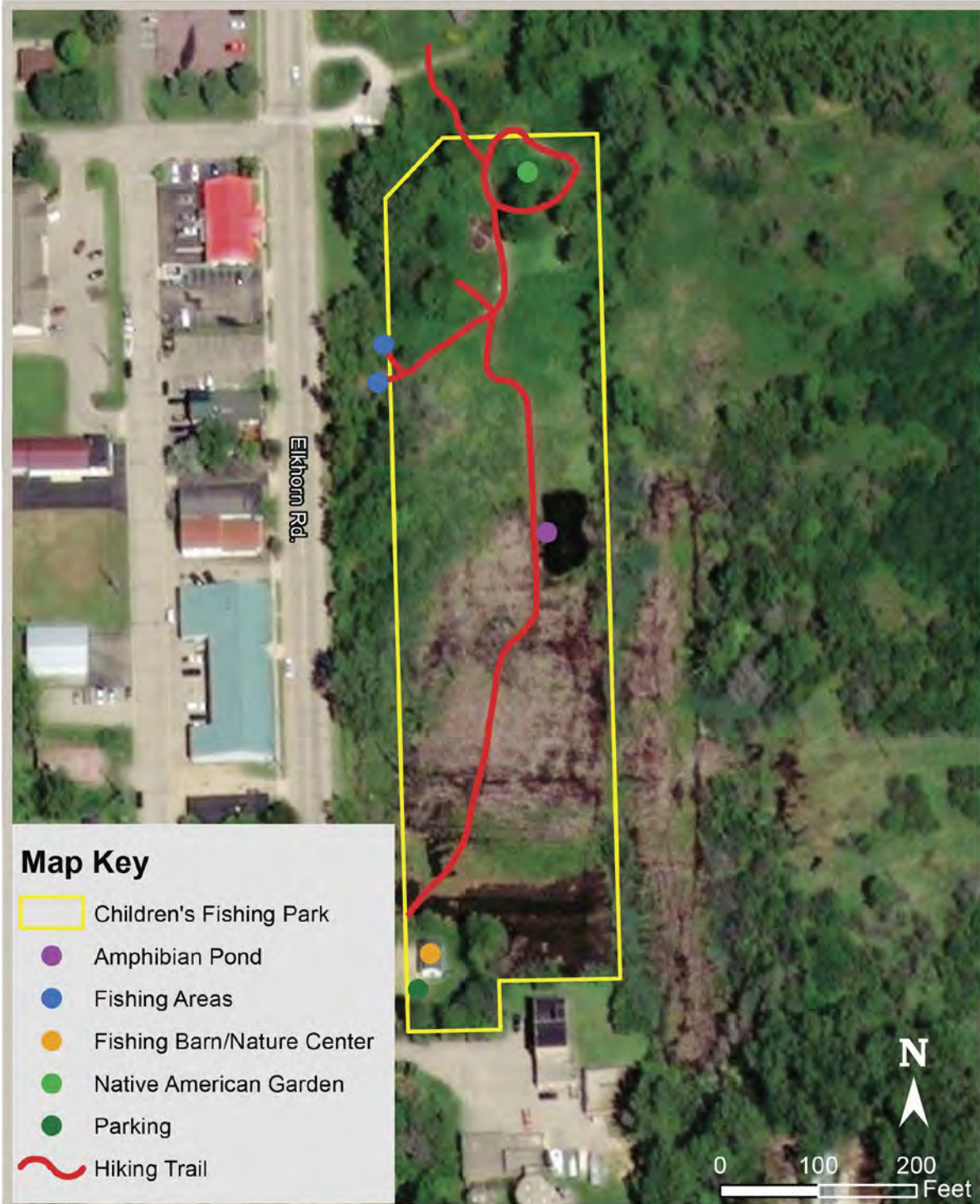
There is a network of approximately 0.7 mile of trails leading down the ridge to the wetland that features a variety of native woodland and wetland plants, such as Mayapple, Red Trillium, Jack-in-the Pulpit and Skunk Cabbage. The wetland empties into a creek and is part of the Lake Como watershed. This nature preserve is beautiful in all seasons, and you may find Mr. Hermansen sitting on a bench along the trail entrance waiting to greet you.

Things you might see:






A red-headed woodpecker, bloodroot, a luna moth, mayapples, or red trillium

Helen Rohner Children's Fishing Park

159 ELKHORN ROAD • WILLIAMS BAY, WI



Map Key

-  Children's Fishing Park
-  Amphibian Pond
-  Fishing Areas
-  Fishing Barn/Nature Center
-  Native American Garden
-  Parking
-  Hiking Trail



PARKING:
Handicapped parking next to the Nature Center at south end and parking along Elkhorn Road

TRAILS: 0.03 miles
Easy with connection to Kishwaukee Nature Conservancy and over 5 miles of trails

Map at Kishwaukee entrance and on the All Trails app



Encouraging children to explore the wonders of nature is the mission of Helen Rohner Children's Fishing Park. Opened in 2018, it was a gift from Jack Rohner and his family in memory of his wife, Helen, who loved children. The green and white barn is a Nature Center that is staffed in the summer months Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors can park along Elkhorn Road and enter the park by the Nature Center. The hike begins at the boardwalk where there are a variety of birds in the wetlands and an amphibian pond filled with frogs, turtles and toads. At the end of the boardwalk are signs leading to the fishing spots and an area to dig for worms. Fishing poles are provided.

Southwick Creek along the highway is a spawning area for brown trout, and there is an educational sign to tell you more about trout habitat. There is also a butterfly garden and a Native American garden, featuring native plants used for healing and food. Storytimes under the walnut tree are held every Wednesday during the summer.

As you leave the fishing park you will enter Kishwaukee Nature Conservancy, a 200-acre public preserve owned by the Village of Williams Bay and protected with a conservation easement by Geneva Lake Conservancy. The preserve features five additional miles of hiking trails.

For more information on events and fishing and nature classes at Helen Rohner Children's Fishing Park, visit www.genevalakeconservancy.org.

Things you might see:

Brown trout, purple coneflower, red-winged blackbirds, or Monarch butterflies

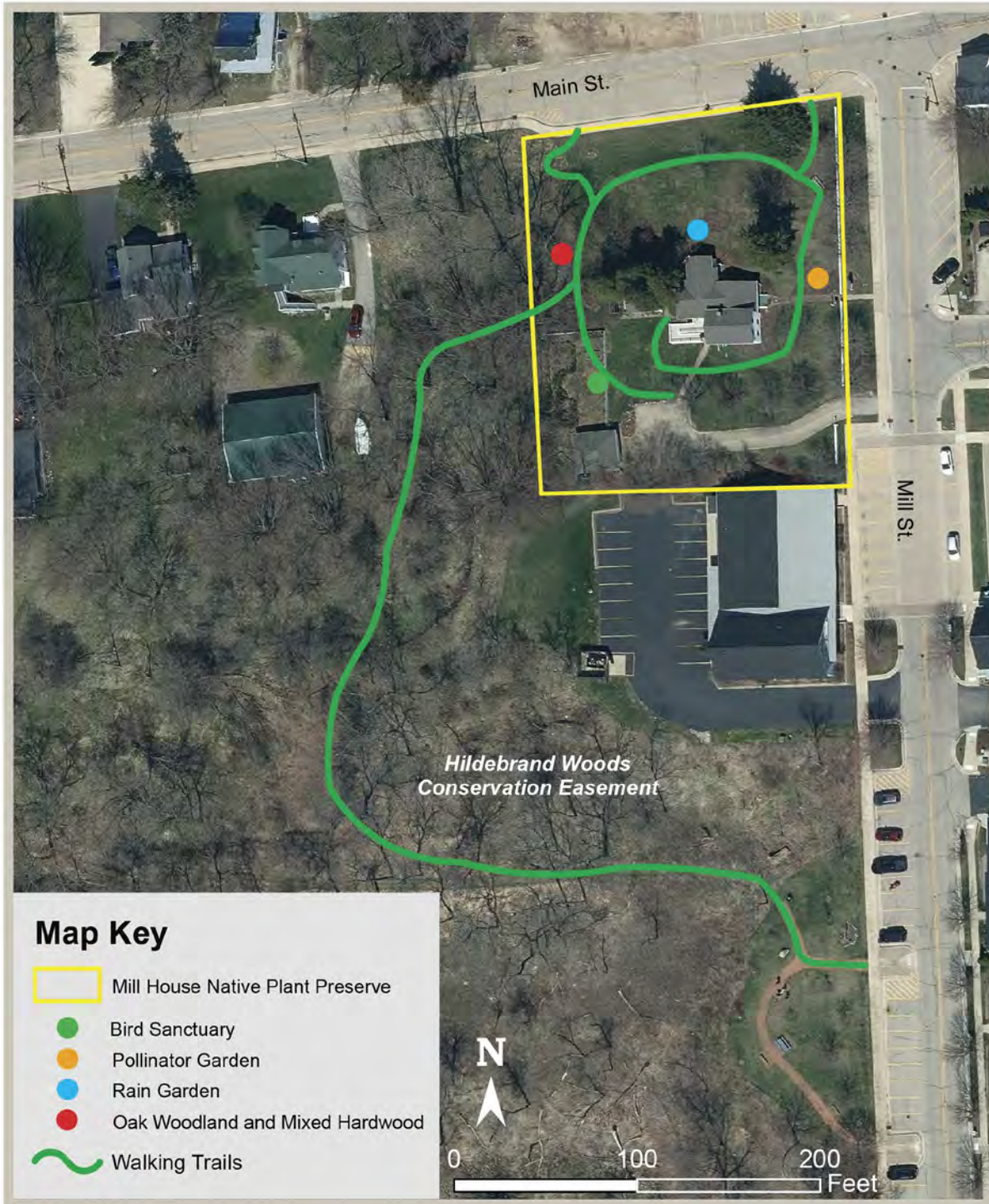
Mill House Native Plant Preserve & Hildebrand Conservancy

398 MILL STREET • FONTANA, WI



PARKING:
Ample village parking provided on Mill Street

TRAILS: 0.5 miles; Easy



Map Key

- Mill House Native Plant Preserve
- Bird Sanctuary
- Pollinator Garden
- Rain Garden
- Oak Woodland and Mixed Hardwood
- ~ Walking Trails

On the one acre of land which includes its staff headquarters, known as the Mill House, Geneva Lake Conservancy began creation of its native plant preserve in 2021. Home to the original family who built a Mill on the adjacent creek in the 1800s, the building itself is on the National Register of Historic Places because of its massive stovewood construction.

As you enter the property, follow the trail at right that features educational signs and native plant identification in the pollinator gardens, rain gardens, prairie and oak identification area. Be sure to note the 100-year-old native silver maple at the back of the property. Follow the trail to the back of the Mill House, past the bird sanctuary connecting Geneva Lake Conservancy land to the trails at the Hildebrand Conservancy, owned by the Village of Fontana. The Hildebrand Conservancy is protected by a conservation easement held by Geneva Lake Conservancy.

As you walk into Hildebrand Conservancy, you will begin to hear the sounds of rushing water from the clear trout stream that flows into Geneva Lake. The trail will fork in about 1,000 feet, and you can either head west to the gazebo that features photos of the Old Mill or head east along the creek's floodplain that will bring you out of the nature preserve to Mill Street where there is a coffee shop.

Things you might see:

Cardinals, a silver maple tree, monarch caterpillars, or New England aster



Geneva Lake Conservancy is an accredited land trust and was formed in 1977 to protect Geneva Lake and its watershed. Since then, it has protected almost 3,000 acres of open land in and around Walworth County through land purchases, land donations and conservation easements. It has five public nature preserves as well as several private wildlife preserves open for guided educational tours only.

For an educational tour of GLC private wildlife preserves, please email outreach@genevalakeconservancy.org.

These preserves include:

- Wallace E. Zabler Preserve • Rochester, WI
- Stevens Family Land Trust • Delavan, WI
- Cimeley Woods • Town of Geneva, WI

For a one-hour consultation on how you can improve the ecological health of your property through the Conservation@Home program, please call our office at 262-275-5700.



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Geneva Lake
Conservancy

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