

Seven Ponds Nature Center's Les Cheneaux Islands Women's Adventure August 23 - 26, 2018



On this adventure we will discover the beauty and history of the Eastern Upper Peninsula as we hike, kayak, and cave through a dynamic landscape formed by ancient seas and glaciers. We will be exploring Drummond Island, the "Gem of the Huron", and the Les Cheneaux Islands, and experience the beauty of a rare and unusual grassland alvar; which is home to a unique mixture of arctic tundra and Great Plains prairie plant species. The dramatic limestone and dolomite rock ledges that make Drummond Island is a true gem. The Les

Cheneaux are a 36 island archipelago, which were formed by retreating glaciers about 12,000 years ago, and were named "the channels" by the French. This stretch of the Lake Huron shoreline from the Les Cheneaux Islands to Drummond Island is one of the most scenic and ecologically diverse places in Michigan. It is rich in marshes, rocky peninsulas, sandy coves, sedge meadows, fens, and tamarack bogs. Bald eagles, loons, black terns, and sedge wrens all make their home in these wetlands.

We will be staying on the beautiful Lake Huron at the Cedar Campus. The campus is on two secluded peninsulas surround the Prentiss Bay, and has 500 acres and 6 miles of shoreline that will envelop us in the lake's majesty. This journey will be an adventure led by a woman and for all women wanting to experience Michigan's natural beauty.

Thursday, August 23 - Arrival and Drummond Island -Michigan Island Alvar

We start our adventure in our living area at the Gloria Taylor Cottage at 12:00 p.m. for a short orientation meeting and lunch where we will learn more about our fellow trippers and the tour. After lunch, we carpool to Detour Village and catch the ferry to Drummond Island to spend the rest of the day exploring. We will discover the ecology and geology of the second largest freshwater island in the United States, and experience an Alvar community and limestone ledges created by the Niagara Escarpment. Maxton Plains is the largest, intact Alvar grasslands in North America, and we will be visiting it inland and along the shoreline. This limestone pavement community hosts plants like Houghton's goldenrod, little bluestem, and prairie dropseed. The Maxton Plains is also home to many birds; upland sandpiper, osprey, northern harriers, and many others. After exploring the

grassland alvar, we'll begin our trek to the limestone ledges to go fossil hunting. This will be an easy 6 mile round trip hike to Lake Huron's shore to view the ledges, and to find fossils from the ancient sea bed. Dinner this night will be on the island at the Port of Call restaurant. This restaurant is under the same roof as many other shops, so you will have time to shop before or after dinner.

Friday, August 24 - Narnia Trail, Kayaking and Sunsets

We start the day with breakfast in the Gloria Taylor Cottage kitchen. After breakfast we start our hiking adventure on the Narnia Trail. This easy 3 mile trail provides an excellent example of shoreline Alvar. The meandering cedar forest trail traverses areas of exposed bedrock and hidden bays with crevices where spleenwort and other limestone loving plants have established themselves. There will be chatter marks and



scarring along the lakeshore from the retreat of the last ice age. This walk is through one of the most magical and dramatic scattering of very large limestone boulders along Northern Lake Huron, a truly unique trail in the Straits. After hiking the Narnia Trail, we will have lunch at our cottage where we can enjoy Lake Huron. After lunch, we will carpool into town to spend the afternoon paddling the protected waters of the Les Cheneaux Islands by kayak with Woods and Water Ecotours. From our kayaks, we will view tranquil inner bays, boreal forests, limestone loving wildflowers, and remnants

of Michigan's glacial history. This kayak adventure will immerse us in a fragile ecosystem called the Great Lakes Marsh, and the species that call these highly productive and rare wetlands home. We may see Bald Eagles at their nests and the state threatened black terns. This trip is designed for the beginner, so do not worry about your experience level! We will have dinner in town, and return to the Gloria Taylor Cottage for a campfire and to watch the sunset over of the lovely Prentiss Bay. A fabulous end to a wonderful day.



Saturday, August 25 - Karst Cave Tour and Swimming

We begin our day with breakfast in the Gloria Taylor Cottage kitchen. After breakfast we make and pack our lunches, and carpool to Trout Lake where we start our caving adventure.

Experience Michigan's premier karst cave in Trout Lake at the Fiborn Karst Preserve. This limestone cave was formed by water erosion from area swamps and streams on its way underground to the Hendrie River. In the cave there are formations, natural arches and an underground waterfall (so, yes, you will be walking through about 1ft of chilly water). We will walk trails featuring a variety of sinkholes and beautiful hardwood forests. Historic limestone quarry remains nearby revealing limestone bedrock and historic buildings. A cool and refreshing experience away from the summer heat!

After our caving, we enjoy our picnic lunches in this wonderful summer woods. After lunch, we head back to the Gloria Taylor Cottage to swim and relax in the waters of Lake Huron. We will carpool into town for dinner and finish the evening back on Lake Huron.

Sunday, August 26 - Good Byes

We have breakfast together in the Gloria Taylor Cottage kitchen, and then prepare to go our separate ways as we head home.

Trip Leader

My name is Carrie Spencer and I am an experienced naturalist who enjoys sharing my knowledge and love of the natural world with others. I have led many trips to the North Country, and feel it is a truly magical place to explore. I very much look forward to visiting the Eastern Upper Peninsula with each and every one of you.

Accommodations

We will be staying at the Cedar Campus in the Gloria Taylor Cottage. Cedar Campus is situated on two different peninsulas in Lake Huron and we will be staying on the peninsula called Mariners' Cove. This cottage is very close to Lake Huron, and with floor to ceiling windows and a dock that stretches out into the bay we will have excellent views of the lake. Cedar Campus can be reached at 906-484-2294. www.intervarsity.org/cedar

Meals

All meals will be included from lunch on Thursday through breakfast on Sunday. Breakfast will be buffet style in our Gloria Taylor Cottage. Lunch fixings will be provided to make a sack lunch. Dinner will be at local restaurants in nearby towns. Additional snacks, drinks, and alcoholic beverages are not included in the trip fee.

Transportation

Transportation to the Upper Peninsula is the participant's responsibility. Seven Ponds will help arrange rides for those who do not wish to drive or drive alone. During the trip some participants will be asked to volunteer to drive to day trip destinations. These participants will be reimbursed for gas used during the tour.

Equipment

One suitcase per person should suffice, plus one day bag for carrying your lunch, field guides, rain gear, and other items on hikes. Please bring comfortable shoes or hiking boots for the days we are walking trails. Weather on the Great Lakes can sometimes be unpredictable, so bring clothes that can be put on and taken off in layers. Additional equipment to consider includes: binoculars, camera, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, water bottle, notebook, hand lens, insect spray, walking stick, alarm clock, swimsuit, beach towel, rain gear, water shoes, and eye glass retainer, if glasses are worn.

Smoking

We ask that smokers refrain from smoking in vehicles and in all situations where nonsmoking participants are in close proximity. There is no smoking allowed in the cottages.

Trip Fee

The fee for this trip is \$895.00 (\$865.00 for Seven Ponds members). This includes room (double occupancy), meals as described above, transportation while in the Eastern Upper Peninsula, kayaking tour, cave tour, ferry fees, and naturalist services. Participants who would like a single room may pay a single supplement of \$240.00. To sign up for the trip, please send your name, address, phone

number, and a \$200.00 deposit to Seven Ponds Nature Center, 3854 Crawford Road, Dryden, Michigan 48428. Please specify whether you plan to drive on your own, or ride with another participant. Full payment is due by June 15.

Cancellation Policy

In the event of cancellation, refunds will be made according to the following schedule. If a cancellation occurs by June 15th, a full refund including deposit will be made. If cancellation occurs between June 15th and July 15th, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the trip will be refunded. If cancellation occurs after July 15th, we will only be able to provide a refund for the portion of the trip fee which is recoverable by Seven Ponds.

Additional Information

If you have questions or need more information, contact Carrie Spencer at (810) 796-3200 or cspencer@sevenponds.org.