



WINTER 2026 PROGRAM GUIDE

December - January - February



Visit the online calendar to register
for programs, see full descriptions,
locations, policies, and more!

 **NORTH LAKELAND
DISCOVERY CENTER**

14006 Discovery Lane
Manitowish Waters, WI

Welcome to the Path of Discovery!

Whether you're a nature enthusiast, a gardening expert, interested in nature & wellness, or just wanting to explore more of the beautiful Northwoods, consider visiting us at North Lakeland Discovery Center!

Nestled in the heart of the Northwoods, North Lakeland Discovery Center is a non-profit nature center and lies within Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest, offering a tranquil escape for outdoor exploration, community events, and connection to the natural world.

Our self-guided exploration activities and recreation opportunities include:

- 🌲 Nature Center with live animal ambassadors
- 🌲 12-miles of multi-use trails
- 🌲 StoryWalk trail, a new book each month
- 🌲 Interpretive gardens to discover
- 🌲 Statehouse Lake access for fishing, swimming, and paddling

Connect with us and the natural world through our upcoming program opportunities.

Make a Difference With Membership

When you join our membership program, your contribution goes directly to impactful initiatives that promote lifelong learning, outdoor exploration, environmental stewardship, and scientific discovery. Your support helps us maintain our trails, offer community and school nature-based programs for little or no cost, provide self-guided educational resources at our Nature Center, sustain our Animal Ambassador Program for injured wildlife education, and more! Members receive discounts on programs or attend for free!



Registering For Programs

Registration can be completed online, by phone, or in person. Visit www.discoverycenter.net for more information on registering or to register for a program. Most programs have a registration deadline. Programs may be canceled if the minimum number of participants has not been met by the registration deadline. Our cancellation policy can be found on our website. Most programs have a wait list available. Call (715) 543-2085 for availability.

Calendar

December

- 3 Knowledge at Noon:
Northwoods Wildlife pg. 8
- 3 Knowledge at Night:
Northwoods Wildlife pg. 9
- 5 Holiday Felted Garland Workshop pg. 10
- 6 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 8 Holiday Wreath Making Workshop pg. 10
- 11 Nibbles n' Knowledge:
Indigenous Stories & Legends pg. 9
- 13 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 13 Jewelry Inspired By Nature Workshop pg. 10
- 16 Natural Pages Reading Group:
Hidden Life of Trees pg. 4
- 18 Minocqua Christmas Bird Count pg. 12
- 20 Manitowish Waters Christmas
Bird Count pg. 12
- 20 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 27 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 27 Critter Feeding Demo pg. 12
- 27 StoryWalk: The Mitten pg. 13
- 27 Candlelit Snowshoe pg. 6
- 30 Family Play Day pg. 13

January

- 3 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 3 Moonshoe Snowshoe at WinMan pg. 6
- 7 Knowledge at Noon:
Great Lakes of the World pg. 8
- 7 Knowledge at Night:
Great Lakes of the World pg. 9
- 9 MECCA Owl Prowl pg. 6
- 10 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 10 Winter Tree ID & Pine Resin Balm
Workshop pg. 10
- 13 Felted Soap & Lotion Bar Workshop pg. 11
- 15 Nibbles n' Knowledge:
Back to the Future pg. 9
- 16 Marshall Wildlife Conservation Area
Snowshoe Trek pg. 6
- 17 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 17 Animal Spotlight Hour: Porcupines pg. 12
- 20 Natural Pages Reading Group:
Human Nature pg. 4
- 21 Naturally Made: Winter Remedies pg. 11
- 23 Lumberjack Trails Snowshoe pg. 6

January cont.

- 24 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 27 Wild Wisdom Game Night:
Amazing Nature Relationships pg. 9
- 31 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 31 Critter Feeding Demo pg. 12
- 31 StoryWalk: Twelve Days of Winter pg. 13
- 31 Moonshoe Snowshoe at MECCA pg. 7

February

- 4 Knowledge at Noon:
Animal Tracking and Sign pg. 8
- 4 Knowledge at Night:
Animal Tracking and Sign pg. 9
- 7 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 7 Valentine Heart-Felted Cabins
Workshop pg. 11
- 7 Van Vliet Old Growth Snowshoe pg. 7
- 12 Nibbles n' Knowledge:
Secret Love Lives pg. 9
- 14 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 14 MECCA Ski/Snowshoe & Sweets pg. 7
- 17 Natural Pages Reading Group:
What An Owl Knows pg. 4
- 18 Tillicum Conservation Area Snowshoe pg. 7
- 21 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 21 Historic Pause Portage & Ice Road
Snowshoe pg. 7
- 21 Animal Spotlight Hour: Woodpeckers pg. 12
- 28 Lakeside Yoga Stretch pg. 5
- 28 Critter Feeding Demo pg. 12
- 28 StoryWalk: In the Winter Woods pg. 13

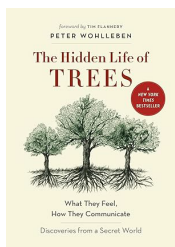


Historic Pause Portage and Ice Road Snowshoe



NATURAL PAGES READING GROUP

Gain a new perspective on nature with our monthly reading group, Natural Pages, a partnership between the Discovery Center and Koller Library. We will focus on a different nature-based book each month, with discussions led by either Discovery Center or library staff. Free and open to the public. Books will be available for checkout at the library in the weeks prior to the meeting.



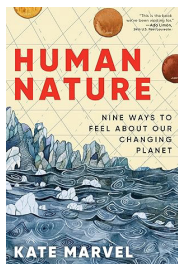
The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate-Discoveries from A Secret World

Author: Peter Wohlleben

This book argues forests are complex social networks where trees "communicate," support each other, and care for their young, drawing on scientific discoveries about tree communication and forest ecology.

Location: Koller Library

Tuesday, December 16 5 - 6 p.m.



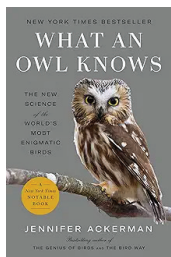
Human Nature: Nine Ways to Feel About Our Changing Planet

Author: Kate Marvel

This book is a deeply felt inquiry into our rapidly changing Earth. In each chapter, Marvel uses a different emotion to explore the science and stories behind climate change.

Location: Discovery Center

Tuesday, January 20 5 - 6 p.m.



What an Owl Knows: The New Science of the World's Most Enigmatic Birds

Author: Jennifer Ackerman

This book explores how researchers are using modern technology and tools to learn how owls communicate, hunt, court, mate, raise their young, and move about from season to season.

Location: Koller Library

Tuesday, February 17 5 - 6 p.m.



MINDFUL LIVING IN NATURE

Immerse yourself in nature while connecting with your mind, body, and spirit at the Discovery Center. Yoga classes will be held in our historic YCC Main Lodge. Learn more about these opportunities on our website.

Lakeside Yoga Stretch

Wherever you are in your yoga practice, this class is for you. Lakeside Yoga is a gently paced class that encourages deep release in the body's major muscle groups. Through mindful stretching, breathwork, and intentional movement, students can increase flexibility, ease chronic pain, and improve their overall range of motion.

Lakeside Yoga also helps build strength and cultivates balance in both body and mind. Whether you're new to yoga or a seasoned practitioner, you'll leave feeling grounded, refreshed, and restored. All are welcome. Bring a yoga mat and water.

Saturdays 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

No registration required.

\$12/session to be paid at the door

December 6, 13, 20, & 27

January 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31

February 7, 14, 21, & 28



“ Every yoga class is different with thoughtful, inspiring quotes, beautiful music, and variation in the poses we do. ”

-Barbara Burns, class participant



TRAIL EXPLORATIONS

Learn about wildlife, plants, landscape and natural world relationships from expert naturalists, historians, geologists, and ecologists as you snowshoe or ski down the trail. All ability levels welcome. Every trip is a new adventure!

Candlelit Snowshoe

Enjoy an evening snowshoe hike on our one-mile snowshoe trail with beautiful luminaries lighting the way. This is a self-led hike and you can come anytime to enjoy the trail during the program time frame, then join us for hot chocolate, s'mores, and a bonfire!

Saturday, December 27 5 - 7 p.m.

Advanced registration appreciated.

\$7/person (snowshoes available for \$5/pair)

Moonshoe Snowshoe at WinMan Trails

In partnership with local recreation area, WinMan trails, we invite you and your families to join us for a Moonshoe in celebration of the Wolf Moon! The evening's festivities will begin with s'mores by the fire.

Instructor: Jenna Richardson

Friday, January 3 7 - 9 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 1

\$5/\$3 youth/Free for all members

MECCA Owl Prowl

Join a Discovery Center Naturalist for a night hike in search of stealthy and elusive owls. We will discuss the owl species of the Northwoods and their interesting adaptations that make them such unique flyers. The event is offered

free of charge and sponsored by MECCA Trails in Mercer.

Instructor: Hannah Thorpe

Friday, January 9 6 - 8 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 7

Free

Marshall Conservation Area Snowshoe Trek

Be a part of a winter snowshoe at the Marshall Wildlife Conservation Area with NLDC and the Northwoods Land Trust! Wander through mixed forests and end your trek at a pier overlooking a tranquil marsh.

Instructor: Jenna Richardson

Friday, January 16 1 - 2 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 14

Lumberjack Trails Snowshoe

Come along as we travel along the Lumberjack Trails in Boulder Junction. Learn about this unique area as we enjoy our time in the woods. This program is sponsored by the Boulder Junction Community Foundation.

Instructors: Jenna Richardson & Licia Johnson

Friday, January 23 1 - 4 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 21

Free

Moonshoe Snowshoe at MECCA Trails

Join a Discovery Center Naturalist as we travel among the trees and shadows during this wonderful moonlit adventure along the MECCA trails! Trail is moderately strenuous with a few hills. The trip will be done without the aid of lights and will be around 1.4 miles in length. This program is sponsored by MECCA Trails in Mercer.

Instructor: Licia Johnson

Saturday, January 31 8 - 10 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 29

Free

Van Vliet Old Growth Snowshoe

Join a Naturalist to learn about this unique hemlock habitat and explore interesting winter animal adaptations. This 2-mile snowshoe is moderately strenuous due to rolling terrain. This event is offered free thanks to a generous sponsorship by the Friends of Van Vliet.

Instructor: Jenna Richardson

Saturday, February 7 1 - 3 p.m.

Registration deadline: February 5

Free

MECCA Trails Ski~Snowshoe and Sweets

Join Naturalists Jenna and Licia on this special winter adventure. You can choose to ski with Jenna or snowshoe with Licia around the beautiful MECCA trails. Following our outside adventure, cozy up in the log chalet and enjoy some sweet treats and hot drinks with us! This program is sponsored by MECCA Trails in Mercer.

Instructors: Jenna Richardson & Licia Johnson

Saturday, February 14 12 - 2 p.m.

Registration deadline: February 12

Free

Tillicum Conservation Area Snowshoe

Snowshoe with the Northwoods Land Trust through a mosaic of forest types and uncover the natural wonders that make this property special. This snowshoe hike will be two miles and participants should prepare for variable terrain.

Instructor: Jenna Richardson

Wednesday, February 18 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Registration deadline: February 16

\$15/Free for members of NLDC/NLT

Historic Pause Portage and Ice Road Snowshoe

Join local historian, Jim Bokern (MW Historical Society), and a Naturalist for a snowshoe on the 6-Pause Portage Trail and logging era ice road. Learn about the people who created and used this historically significant trail, linking the Manitowish River and Mercer Lake. The snowshoe is about 2 miles in length and the trail is moderately strenuous.

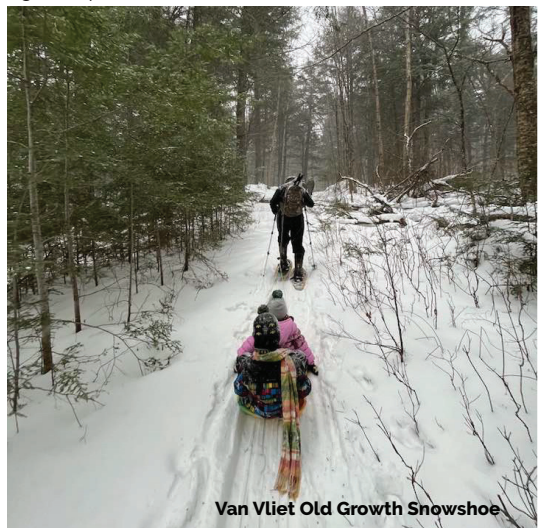
Instructors: Jim Bokern & Hannah Thorpe

Saturday, February 21

10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Registration deadline: February 19

\$30/\$24 member of NLDC or MWHS



Van Vliet Old Growth Snowshoe



KNOWLEDGE AT NOON

Get involved in this monthly series! Bring a bag lunch to your favorite Northwoods libraries for a one-hour nature presentation. Our naturalists will share insights on various nature topics. All ages welcome!

Northwoods Wildlife

From salamanders and turkeys to black bears and snakes, the Northwoods has incredibly diverse wildlife. Join Naturalist Hannah as she discusses the families of animals that call the Northwoods home and shares information on the most common species one might encounter.

Instructor: Hannah Thorpe

Location: Minocqua Library

Wednesday, December 3 12 - 1 p.m.
No fee or registration required

Great Lakes of the World

Midwesterners take pride in our access to the Great Lakes, especially Lake Superior as the world's largest freshwater lake by surface area. Learn about our local Great Lakes, and other magnificent great lakes of the world that will captivate you by their grandeur, volume, and ecological significance.

Instructor: Jenna Richardson

Location: Winchester Library

Wednesday, January 7 12 - 1 p.m.
No fee or registration required

Animal Tracking and Sign

Join Naturalist Licia as we learn how to identify all the interesting tracks and signs animals leave behind during the snowy season!

Instructor: Licia Johnson

Location: Koller Library in Manitowish Waters

Wednesday, February 4 12 - 1 p.m.
No fee or registration required



“The Discovery Center's outstanding programs bring engaging, informative and fun learning experiences for all ages into our library. We're so lucky and grateful to have the Center in our community!”

-Callie Bates, Library Director, Koller Library



ENVIRONMENTAL EVENINGS

Be a part of our evening programs to explore diverse environmental topics in a relaxed atmosphere. Led by knowledgeable guest lecturers and Discovery Center staff, these sessions are perfect for winding down after a busy day.

Nibbles n' Knowledge Series

Join us for our monthly adult lecture series. We will serve light appetizers and have a cash bar from 5 - 6 p.m. and the presentation will run from 6 - 7 p.m. These programs are held in our Historic YCC Main Lodge. For a full description on each program, please visit our website. Please register two days prior to event date.

\$17/\$14 member/\$20 at the door

Indigenous Stories & Legends: Connecting our Past, Present, and Future

Instructor: Norman Crazy Thunder
Thursday, December 11 5 - 7 p.m.

Back to the Future- The Ojibwe Example of Coexistence with Wolves

Instructor: Peter David
Retired Wildlife Biologist
Thursday, January 15 5 - 7 p.m.

Secret Love Lives - Part 12

Instructor: Discovery Center Staff
Thursday, February 12 5 - 7 p.m.

Wild Wisdom Game Night: Amazing Nature Relationships

Participate in this fun and interactive Jeopardy-style program. Test your knowledge on amazing nature

relationships. We will serve light snacks and have a cash bar at 5:30 p.m., and the program will start at 6 p.m. Prizes will be awarded to the winning team!

Instructors: Discovery Center Naturalists

Tuesday, January 27 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Registration deadline: January 25
\$10/\$5 member

Knowledge at Night

Did you miss our Knowledge at Noon programs? Get involved in these special members-only events offered free of charge to our generous member community. We will have a short snack/social period with our donation bar open beginning at 5:30 p.m. followed by the presentation.

Northwoods Wildlife

Instructor: Hannah Thorpe
Wednesday, December 3 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Great Lakes of the World

Instructor: Jenna Richardson
Wednesday, January 7 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Animal Tracks & Sign

Instructor: Licia Johnson
Wednesday, February 4 5:30 - 7 p.m.



Holiday Wreath Making Workshop

NATURALLY CREATIVE

Show us your creativity at workshops featuring natural materials, methods, and themes. Each class is an opportunity to learn new skills and techniques from expert instructors in a supportive and inspiring environment.

Holiday Felted Garland Workshop

Come craft a festive winter/holiday-themed felted garland to brighten up your home this season! We'll create fun shapes with wool and cookie cutters, then attach them to a string alongside felted balls for a charming decorative piece.

Instructors: Mary Burns & Licia Johnson

Friday, December 5 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Registration deadline: December 3

\$40 (includes all materials and tools, which you get to keep!)/\$35 (if you have your own felting foam pad and needles)

Holiday Wreath Making Workshop

Get ready for the season and join Judy from JJ's Acres as we construct a high-quality, 24-inch outdoor wreath. We will use at least three different types of conifers, designer bows, and other decorations!

Instructor: Judy Jurries

Monday, December 8 6 - 8 p.m.

Registration deadline: December 6

\$45/wreath

Jewelry Inspired by Nature

Create nature-inspired jewelry with us at the Discovery Center! Participants will have the chance to make earrings or a pendant out of natural products like birch bark, driftwood, stones, and copper.

Instructors: Darcy Lanz-Sage & Jenna Richardson

Saturday, December 13

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Registration deadline: December 11

\$45/\$40 member

Winter Tree ID & Pine Resin Balm Workshop

Join Naturalist Licia as we learn how to ID the wonderful trees around us during the winter season. We will start inside with some basic tree ID skills, then hit the trail for a tree exploration hike. When we return we will be crafting a soothing lip and skin balm made with pine resin infused oil.

Instructor: Licia Johnson

Saturday, January 10 1 - 3 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 8

\$28/\$20 member



Felted Soap & Lotion Bar Workshop

Discover the science and craft behind natural bath products in this hands-on workshop! Participants will learn how to create their own lotion bars and felted soap, exploring how the process of felting transforms wool into a protective, exfoliating layer to extend the life of the soap. All materials provided; no prior experience needed.

Instructors: Darcy Lanz-Sage & Jenna Richardson

Tuesday, January 13 3 - 5 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 11

\$35/\$30 members

Naturally Made: Winter Remedies

Winter can be tough on our bodies. Come join us to craft enjoyable, nourishing products to help you navigate the season. We'll be making a calming bath soak, healing calendula lip balm, winter chest rub, small candle, and elderberry syrup. All products you make you will get to take home!

Instructors: Licia Johnson & Jenna Richardson

Wednesday, January 21 5 - 6 p.m.

Registration deadline: January 19

\$30/\$25 member

Valentine Heart-Felt Cabin Workshop

We will create needle felted cabins with colorful wool fleece and also include some fun felted heart details to give it a Valentine's Day twist! This class will cover basic needle-felting techniques as well as some advanced methods.

Instructor: Mary Burns

Saturday, February 7 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Registration deadline: February 5

\$55 (includes all materials and tools, which you get to keep!)/\$47 (if you have your own felting foam pad and needles)



Felted Soap & Lotion Bar Workshop



Holiday Felted Garland Workshop



Naturally Made



WILDLIFE INSIGHTS

Explore the fascinating realm of wildlife with captivating programs, workshops, and insightful encounters. Discover the beauty, uniqueness, and marvels of our native animals.

Animal Spotlight Hour

Drop in anytime during the hour to learn from a Discovery Center Naturalist as we explore the amazing creatures found in our own backyards! This event is offered free of charge to participants thanks to generous funds provided by St. Matthias Thrift Shop.

11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Porcupines

Saturday, January 17

Woodpeckers

Saturday, February 21



Critter Feeding Demo

The Discovery Center is home to a variety of animal ambassadors who all have unique dietary needs that must be taken in account when caring for them. Join a Discovery Center Naturalist to witness our feeding procedures in action!

This event is offered free of charge to participants thanks to generous funds provided by St. Matthias Thrift Shop.

Saturdays, 12 - 12:30 p.m.

December 27

January 31

February 28

Christmas Bird Count

The annual Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count is an enjoyable citizen science activity focused on monitoring the abundance of Northwoods winter resident birds. This is a great activity for beginner and experience birders alike.

For more information on how to get involved, visit the Audubon Society's website or contact

hannah@discoverycenter.net.



Minocqua

Thursday, December 18

Manitowish Waters

Saturday, December 20



FAMILY NATURE CONNECTIONS

Hit the road and visit the Discovery Center for fun and educational programs that the whole family can enjoy! Tailored for nature-appreciating kids of all ages, these engaging programs are designed to inspire the next generation while providing a memorable experience for everyone!

StoryWalk (ages 4-8)

Join a Discovery Center Naturalist as we take a walk down the Discovery Nature Trail while reading a nature inspired book. This program combines literacy and outdoor activity and includes a fun craft. The first 10 families that register will receive a free copy of the book.

1 - 2 p.m.

Free program and books sponsored by the Shepherd-Howells Fund



12 Days of Winter

Saturday, January 31

Registration deadline:
January 30



In the Winter Woods

Saturday, February 28

Registration deadline:
February 27



The Mitten

Saturday, December 27

Registration deadline:
December 26

Family Play Day 2025

Tuesday, December 30

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

- *Winter obstacle course
- *Snowshoeing
- *Face painting
- *Indoor crafts
- *Horse-drawn sleigh rides
- *Hot drinks by Pop Fusion
- *Lunch for purchase
- *And much more!



Traveling Naturalist Program

Did you know our Naturalists can come to you via our Traveling Naturalist program? Each year we visit community centers, libraries, and even private homes to teach a wide variety of nature-based programs. Ranging from turtle programs utilizing our live ambassador animals to programs on foraging, wolves, and salamanders, we have a program for everyone! Our program pricing is based on an hourly rate and mileage to the program and may include material fees. For more information on our Traveling Naturalist Program contact: Programs@discoverycenter.net



Residential Program



Residential Programs help people of all ages and abilities foster a deep connection to and appreciation of the natural world through engaging and interactive programming during overnight experiences. Our programs shape young adults and youth to become responsible land stewards and passionate conservationists while encouraging teamwork and life skill development. For more information on our Residential Programs contact: Residential@discoverycenter.net

Woods & Water Program

Our team of conservation specialists and emerging professionals are dedicated to protecting healthy lakes and preserving the Northwoods. Through hands-on work in conservation practices like invasive species prevention, shoreline restoration, and community outreach, we promote best stewardship practices and an ethic of care for our natural resources. For more information on our Woods & Water Program contact: Woodsandwater@discoverycenter.net



Facility & Wedding Rentals

Discover a tranquil retreat in Manitowish Waters, Vilas County, where nature creates the perfect backdrop for your gathering. Our lakeside location offers ample space and amenities for overnight stays.

Enjoy recreational activities like kayaking, hiking, or simply relaxing in the beautiful surroundings. Our Historic Main Lodge, with its charming architecture, features comfortable gathering spaces and modern classrooms for workshops. For overnight lodging, our cozy bunkhouses foster connection among guests.

For a unique experience, consider hosting your wedding here, with scenic views and an outdoor ceremony option in our amphitheater. Let us help you create an unforgettable event in this serene lakeside paradise.



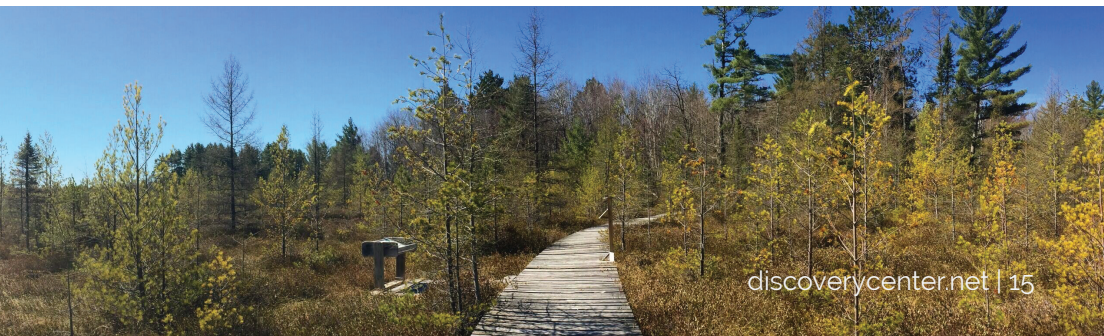
Contact Us

For information on reserving our facility spaces, registering for a program, or details about the North Lakeland Discovery Center contact us at:
Contact@discoverycenter.net or (715) 543-2085

Hours of Operation

Nature Center Hours:
Tuesday - Saturday: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Closed Sunday & Monday

Grounds & trails are open year-round, daily from dawn until dusk.



TRAIL MAP



NORTH LAKE LAND DISCOVERY CENTER

Hiking • Biking • XC Skiing • Snowshoeing








TRAIL DISTANCES

- Interpretive Trail - 0.8 miles
- Little Bit Longer Loop - 1.2 miles
- Bog Boardwalk - 1.8 miles
- Snowshoe Loop - 2.2 miles
- Statehouse Lake Loop - 2.5 miles
- Lookout - 2.6 miles
- Northern Cruise - 2.8 miles
- Big River - 3.2 miles
- Outer perimeter is 4.32 miles



Discovery Center Trails

The Discovery Center offers 12 miles of trails for you to explore this season. When snow levels allow, we groom the trails for single-track classic skiing and snowshoeing. While use of the trails is free, donations are welcome to help maintain their quality. While enjoying the trails, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

-  Dogs must be on a leash at all times, please pick up after your pet
-  Please stay on the designated trails
-  Each intersection is indicated on a map at that location
-  Please be respectful of others using the trail system
-  Please respect groomed ski trails by not walking on them with boots and staying to the side of them if you are on snowshoes