ALLEGAN FOREST

THE ORIGINAL FOREST COVER OF THE ALLEGAN FOREST WAS MAINLY A MIXTURE OF OAK AND WHITE PINE WITH LOWLAND HARDWOODS ON BOTTOM LANDS. THE LAST LARGE STAND OF WHITE PINE WAS CUT IN THE 1890'S JUST EAST OF SWAN CREEK POND.

LOGGERS WERE ACTIVE IN THE ALLEGAN FOREST AREA DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE 1800'S. SAW MILLS WERE LOCATED ON SWAN CREEK, AND LOGS WERE ALSO FLOATED DOWN TO MILLS ALONG THE KALAMAZOO RIVER.


THE ALLEGAN STATE FOREST CONTAINS ABOUT 33,000 ACRES OF STATE OWNED LAND. THIS IS EQUAL TO 5 SQUARE MILES. IT IS MANAGED FOR TIMBER PRODUCTION, RECREATION, AND WILDLIFE. THERE ARE FIVE CAMPGROUNDS AND PICNIC AREAS IN THE FOREST WHICH ARE PROVIDED WITH PICNIC TABLES, STOVES, TOILETS, AND DRINKING WATER. NO PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR CAMPING EXCEPT AT THE ELY LAKE CAMPGROUND.

THE SWAN CREEK WILDLIFE EXPERIMENTAL STATION CONDUCTS RESEARCH ON WILDLIFE PROBLEMS, ITS 7,000 ACRES ARE OPEN TO MANAGED PUBLIC HUNTING UNDER PERMIT. IT IS NOTED FOR ITS "BIGH RAPID" GOOSE HUNTING AND WILDLIFE REFUGE. THE FOREST IS A FAVORITE AREA FOR BOW AND ARROW DEER HUNTING IN SEASON.

ANIMALS AND BIRDS COMMONLY SEEN IN THIS AREA ARE: FOX SQUIRREL, CHIPMUNK, GREAT BLUE HERON, BLACK DUCK, BLUE WING TEAL, BLUE JAY, OTHERS THAT MAY BE SEEN ARE: RABBIT, MUSKRAT, WOODCHUCK, DEER, RED FOX, OPOSSUM, RACCOON, WILD TURKEY, CANADIAN GOOSE, MALLARD DUCK, RUFEED GROUSE, RED TAIL HAWK, LITTLE GREEN HERON, AND MANY OTHERS.

WAKAZOO TRAIL

Sponsored By
FRUIT BELT AREA COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
110 S. BURDICK ST.
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

Developed By
BOY SCOUT TROOP 37, SPONSORED
BY SAINT LUKES EPISCOPAL
CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO

In Co-Operation With
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

AWARDS
1. OVERNIGHT PACK HIKE: MEDAL COST $2.00 EA.
2. DAY PACK HIKE: POCKET PAPER COST $1.00 EA.
Hikers who earn the medal and hike the trail a second time will receive a small teepee to attach to the ribbon of the medal.

WHAT IS THE WAKAZOO TRAIL?


LOCATION OF WAKAZOO TRAIL
THE WAKAZOO TRAIL IS LOCATED IN THE ALLEGAN STATE FOREST, ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN. IT CAN BE BEST REACHED FROM THE CITY OF ALLEGAN AS FOLLOWS: TAKE COMBINED HIGHWAY M-40 AND M-89 NORTHWEST TO THE OUTSKIRTS OF ALLEGAN. ABOUT 0.4 MILE BEYOND THE ALLEGAN HIGH SCHOOL LEAVE M-40 AND M-89 AND TURN LEFT ONTO MONROE ROAD. FOLLOW MONROE ROAD FOR 5.8 MILES TO WHERE IT JOINS 118TH AVENUE. CONTINUE ON 118TH AVENUE FOR ABOUT 0.2 MILE TO 44TH STREET WHERE A SIGN FOR PINE POINT CAMPGROUND IS FOUND ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE ROAD. TURN LEFT AND FOLLOW THE SIGNS INTO THE CAMPGROUND. IF THE PINE POINT CAMPGROUND TURN IS MISSED, IT WILL BECOME EVIDENT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, SINCE A SHORT DISTANCE BEYOND THIS SIGN, ON 118TH AVE, IS THE BRIDGE ACROSS SWAN CREEK.
THE WAKAZOO TRAIL WAS DEVELOPED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE FORESTRY DIVISION, MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION, AND IN PART UTILIZES EXISTING STATE FOREST FOOT TRAILS.

SINCE THESE FOOT TRAILS HAVE BEEN MARKED WITH DIFFERENT COLOR PAINT, THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN ORDER TO AVOID CONFUSION.


AFTER STARTING SOUTH THE TRAIL AGAIN DIVIDES INTO TWO SECTIONS. TAKE THE UPPER SECTION, TO THE RIGHT, AND CONTINUE TO THE SWAN CREEK CAMP GROUND WHERE IT JOINS THE LOWER SECTION. CONTINUE SOUTH, CROSSING 118TH AVE., AROUND THE WEST SIDE OF SWAN CREEK POND. TURN RIGHT AT THE JUNCTION WITH THE CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL. TURN RIGHT AND CONTINUE TO ELY LAKE CAMP GROUND.

SECOND DAY
FROM ELY LAKE CAMP GROUND TAKE THE YELLOW TRAIL, FOR A LITTLE OVER ONE-HALF MILE, UNTIL IT INTERSECTS THE ORANGE TRAIL. TAKE THE ORANGE TRAIL, TO THE LEFT, FOR ABOUT ONE-HALF MILE UNTIL IT JOINS THE GREEN TRAIL NEAR AN ABANDONED FARM (ONLY THE FOOTINGS OF THE BUILDINGS ARE STILL VISIBLE). FOLLOW THE GREEN TRAIL IN A NORTHERLY DIRECTION PAST THE CEMETERY AT THE CORNER OF 122ND AVE., AND 52ND STREET. CIRCLE EAST AND THEN ON A SOUTHEASTERN DIRECTION OVER PART OF THE OLD STAGE COACH ROAD, TO THE BLUE TRAIL ALONG THE WEST SIDE OF SWAN CREEK. FOLLOW THE BLUE TRAIL SOUTH TO 118TH AVE., CROSS SWAN CREEK AT THE DAM AND GO BACK TO PINE POINT CAMP GROUND.

OUTDOOR CODE

BE CLEAN IN MY OUTDOOR MANNERS
I WILL TREAT THE OUTDOORS AS A HERITAGE TO BE IMPROVED FOR OUR GREATER ENJOYMENT. I WILL KEEP MY TRASH AND GARbage OUT OF AMERICA'S WATERS, FIELDS, WOODS, AND ROADWAYS.

BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE
I WILL PREVENT WILDFIRE. I WILL BUILD MY FIRE IN A SAFE PLACE AND BE SURE IT IS OUT BEFORE I LEAVE.

BE CONSIDERATE IN THE OUTDOORS
I WILL TREAT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY WITH RESPECT. I WILL REMEMBER THAT USE OF THE OUTDOORS IS A PRIVILEGE I CAN LOSE BY ABUSE.

BE CONSERVATION MINDED
I WILL LEARN HOW TO PRACTICE GOOD CONSERVATION OF SOIL, WATERS, FORESTS, MINERALS, GRASSLANDS, AND WILDLIFE, AND I WILL URG others TO DO THE SAME. I WILL USE SPORTSMANLIKE METHODS IN ALL MY OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.
INDIAN

HISTORY

Ottawa Indian villages were located along the Kalamazoo River and its tributaries all the way from Lake Michigan to Jackson. The more important villages were located at Saugatuck, Allegan, Kalamazoo, and Battle Creek. At the beginning of the 19th century, Wakazoo was chief of the Kalamazoo River Valley Ottawa, with headquarters at the “Big Horseshoe Bend” where Allegan is presently located.

The Ottawans stretch from the Kalamazoo River Valley area along the west side of the state, to the Straits of Mackinac and into the upper peninsula.

Neighboring Indian tribes were the Pottawatomies in the St. Joseph River Valley and the Shawnees in the northern part of Indiana and Ohio.

Both the Ottawas and the Pottawatomies were with the Great Ottawa Chief Pontiac in the campaign against the British at Detroit during the Chief Pontiac uprising in 1763. During the War of 1812, the Ottawa and the Pottawatomies joined with Tecumseh, fighting with the British against the United States. This force was defeated by General Harrison at Tippecanoe in northern Indiana in 1811, and also at the Battle of Thames in 1813 where Tecumseh was killed.

The first white man to do any extensive exploring in this area of the state was the Frenchman, La Salle. He spent the winter of 1679-1680 with the Indians in the St. Joe River Valley. Around 1820 when settlers began to arrive in this area Macksaubers was chief of the local Ottawas. He spent the winters at Allegan and moved to Mackinaw for the summer months.

Later when pioneers settled this area, many of the Indian trails were used as logging roads and old stage coach roads. Part of the Wakazoo Trail follows the old stage coach road running from Kalamazoo and points east, through Allegan and Hamilton to points north. The flourishing stage coach located near the corner of 123rd Avenue and 48th Street. Now only a cemetery with a few markers remain.

Many Indian relics have been found, and are being found in this area. Along the Wakazoo Trail to the west of Swan Creek still stands several “Indian Sign Times” (trees or rocks in a certain direction or shape to mark a trail or other important feature in the area.) Two of these are on the trail, while a third is located within a few minutes walk from Bay View Point. A short distance south of the iron bridge are the remains of some “Indian Paint Pots.” These are depressions in the ground where the Indians have dug certain types of minerals for making paint. Probably some of their war paints came from these pits.

While hiking the wooded trail, it is not very hard for a boy with a little imagination and spirit of adventure to find himself walking over the faded moccasin prints made by some Indian brave not too many years ago. Could it be one Chief Wakazoo’s brave who came up the Kalamazoo River from Saugatuck to hunt in the forest and along the banks of Swan Creek? Or may be an Ottawa Indian Party, making its way down the Kalamazoo River, and camping in the forest before continuing to Lake Michigan and then north or south along the Lake Shore.

Signs from the moccasin prints may say that runners of the Ottawas and the Pottawatomies are getting together the braves from the different villages for war against the Shawnees who were invading the tribal grounds from the north.

HIKING REGULATIONS

To be eligible for a trail award the hiker must be a registered Scout, Explorer, or Scouter and comply with all regulations pertaining to this trail.

The Wakazoo Trail may be hiked according to two methods, (1) with overnight pack, or (2) with a day pack. A unit may choose either method, or both. If a unit chooses to use both methods, it must split into hiking parties, each party consisting entirely of overnight pack hikers or day pack hikers. No attempt should be made to hike the trail as a mixed party.

OVERNIGHT PACK HIKING

1. Scouts must have attained the rank of First Class.
2. All equipment and personal gear needed for both days must be carried by the hikers on their backs for the entire trip.
3. A one day’s supply of water must be carried.

DAY PACK HIKING

1. Open to boy scouts of any rank.
2. Only lunches, water, first aid kit, etc. can be carried.
3. Camping equipment and additional food should be transported by car to Ely Lake Camp ground.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR BOTH GROUPS

1. Complete Scout or Explorer uniform should be worn.
2. Each hiker must hike the trail as a member of a hiking party, and the hiking party must remain together during the entire trip.
3. One adult must accompany each hiking party.
4. The trail must be completed in two consecutive days with the overnight camp being made at Ely Lake Camp Ground.
5. All hikers must identify the numbered trees along the trail.
6. Each hiker must submit a 100-word report of his experiences on the trail. This report will be submitted to the unit leader.
7. All rules and regulations of the Michigan Department of Conservation must be followed all times.