

Dinsmore Woods Nature Preserve



Location: western Boone County KY: 5700 Burlington Pike,
Burlington KY 41005

Website: www.boonecountyky.org/parks/ParkInfo/18

Directions: Take Exit #181 from I - 75/71. Go West on KY 18 for 11.3 miles, passing through Burlington at mile 5. The preserve is on the right just past the intersection with Middle Creek Rd. Parking is available at Middle Creek Park on the left side of the road.

Trail Miles: 1.7 miles

Trail Features: Dinsmore Woods trail goes through 107-acre Dinsmore Woods, which once belonged to the adjacent Dinsmore Homestead, a visit in itself (see www.dinsmorefarm.org). The trail is hilly and treacherous in some places, needing some work in places. In fall 2013, there were many places where fallen trees across the path necessitated crawling over or under. In some places the trail is not clearly marked and could be easily missed. In the spring there are stinging nettles so a hiker is advised to wear suitable clothing!

Dogs: No dogs allowed. This includes dogs on leashes.

History: This is a unique natural area acquired in 1985 by the Kentucky Chapter of the Nature Conservancy. It has never been commercially logged so is one of the most mature forests in the area. It is also one of the only places in Northern Kentucky to experience Pleistocene glaciations. The glaciations and retreat resulted in an area of moist fertile soil and higher soil acidity than is found in nearby areas. The resulting forest is a mix of hardwoods with species of maple, oak, and ash predominating.

The Nature Conservancy acquired the site because of the presence of Running Buffalo Clover, a federally endangered plant species that can be found adjacent to the forest. This species was thought to be extinct until 1985 when two small populations were found in West Virginia. Years

later when there were only 46 known populations in USA, 23 were in Kentucky. So the Nature Conservancy was using the site to encourage proliferation of the Running Buffalo Clover, also partnering with researchers from Northern Kentucky University to test methods of controlling invasive species (especially garlic mustard), which are a threat to the native clover. Nowadays Dinsmore is managed by Boone County.

Other Activities: Dinsmore is popular for bird watching, likely due to the unique character of the forest. It's only 2 miles from Boone Cliffs, another popular hiking destination. During hunting season, use caution since private lands surrounding the park are used for hunting.

