

## How to Use this Guide...

There is more going on in Busey Woods than a first glance reveals. Take time during your hike to look closely, listen, smell and even touch. Roll over a log and see what is below, lie on your belly and peer into the ponds to see who swims by. Stretch your neck and search the tree canopy for life that lives high up in the forest - **explore, explore, explore!**

Experience all that Busey Woods has at different times of the day and year. There is sure to be something different for you each and every time you visit.

This guide will get you started in your exploration of Busey Woods and entice you to come back. There is no specific starting point - begin where you want. Follow any path and finish when you decide you are done. Stop in at the Anita Purves Nature Center and ask questions, explore the Field Station and search in the Educator Resource Room for more information.

As you use this guide, be sure to share with others what you experience. Write down your observations and findings as you hike. When you return to your home, use this guide to explore your own backyard and neighborhood. Many of the plants and animals that you find in Busey Woods can be found right where you live.



### 1 Being Sense-ible

There is always something different and exciting to experience during your hike in Busey Woods. Each season brings change. What's going on NOW in Busey Woods? Using at least two of your senses, name three things that are new to you this visit and can only be found in this season.

### 2 Home Addresses

Just like your home, Busey Woods is home to many different plants and animals. Each layer of the forest supports different plants and wildlife. Some live high in the tree canopy, while others prefer a moist dark rotting log. Stretch your neck and find two signs of wildlife high in the trees.

### 3 Play a Role

Busey Woods does not exist in isolation. Over time it has changed dramatically. Surrounded by urban landscape, life found in Busey Woods needs help from people to thrive and maintain its diversity. You can play a role in the continued preservation of Busey Woods. Name one invasive species and why it is harmful for native species.

### 4 Pondering Pond Life

Busey Woods is wet at some times and dry at others. The Saline Branch and surrounding watershed drainage play an important role in why Busey Woods has seasonal ponds. The animals that live in the flood areas of the woods need interesting strategies in which to survive. Is the pond dry or wet today? Look for signs of animals in the ponds. Name one way that an animal has adapted to life in the pond today.

## All About Busey Woods...

Busey Woods is a truly unique, beautiful woodland. It is a peaceful place to spend time and retreat from the hustle and bustle of urban life. Busey Woods is one of the few remnants of what used to be a 10-square-mile forest area called the Big Grove. There was a time when development was proposed for Busey Woods, but through the interest and action of local citizens, this remnant was saved.

Busey Woods is a 59-acre woodland that grew along the drainage of the Saline Branch and the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River. Once covering much of north Urbana, this grove was an island of trees in the midst of a prairie sea. Busey Woods and a section of the district's new Weaver Park are the only surviving parcels of the Big Grove that are open to the public.

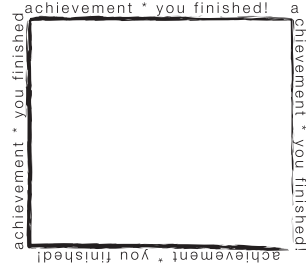
In the 1960's, Busey Woods was slated for commercial development, but was saved with citizen action. The University of Illinois owned the land for nearly three decades. During some of this time, the Urbana Park District leased the land. The District purchased Busey Woods in 1991.

From the leaves on the trees to life in the ponds, Busey Woods is always changing. Be sure to come back often and view for yourself. There is sure to be something different each time you visit.



## Awards, Awards, Awards!

Once you have completed this guide, stop in at the Nature Center and share your exploration with the staff. Your observations and exploration will assist the staff in keeping records of life in Busey Woods. The staff would also like to celebrate your exploration experience - be sure to ask for your Busey Woods Naturalist sticker.



\_\_\_\_\_ [ date ] \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [ name ] \_\_\_\_\_

has looked closely -  
**Up, Down & Around**  
in Busey Woods!

### Curiosity Tempted?

Hopefully your time in Busey Woods has prompted many more questions than answers for you. A naturalist is always curious and always sharing what they find. This guide is only one of many ways that you can explore Busey Woods and other natural areas. We hope that you will take advantage of some other ways too:

- Sign up for a nature center program. Many are offered for all ages every season. Ask for a program flier at the front desk.
- Visit the Audubon Gift Shop and take home an identification book to help you conduct your own backyard biodiversity search.
- Adopt a Nature Center education animal. These non-releasable animals are ambassadors that help area school children learn more about local wildlife.
- Help out at a natural area workday. Remove invasive species while meeting others interested in local natural history.

Stop by the nature center lobby desk to ask for more information.

