How to visit Hackmatack?

Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge is receiving lots of inquiries from folks who want to visit Hackmatack NWR. We are so excited that everyone is ready to get out and explore our new National Wildlife Refuge!

Building new refuges take time. It will take years to build the approximately 11,000 acre refuge which the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) envisions.

In 2018, the USFWS acquired two tracts of land that are now open to the public. Directions can be found at [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Hackmatack/visit/plan_your_visit.html](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Hackmatack/visit/plan_your_visit.html)

- **Turner Tract**, Hwy H north of Genoa, City WI- In 2013, Ducks Unlimited bought this 86-acre parcel that contains a high-quality woodland. DU recreated wetlands and planted prairie on the formerly farmed parts of the site. On June 5, 2018, USFWS celebrated DU’s donation of this site to Hackmatack NWR, making this the first official Hackmatack NWR lands open to the public.

- **Perricone Tract**, On Thayer Rd, just west off of Rt 47, between Hebron and Woodstock, IL- Openlands bought this 27-acre parcel that is bisected by Nippersink Creek and restored cultivated land on the site to prairie. USFWS acquired the land from Openlands in May 2018.

There are numerous other conservation lands in the Hackmatack region where you can visit and get the feel for what Hackmatack NWR will become as land acquisition and restoration proceeds.

- **Glacial Park**- McHenry County Conservation District site (access from Rt 31 between the villages of Ringwood and Richmond, IL, take Harts Rd west)
  Spring and Fall are ideal times to see migrating shorebirds and waterfowl at Glacial Park. Look for them at Lost Valley Marsh or at restored wetlands beside the [Lost Valley Visitor Center](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Hackmatack/visit/plan_your_visit.html).

- **Four Season Nature Preserve**- City of Lake Geneva Park (access from County Highway H, between Genoa City and Lake Geneva, WI)
  This small preserve gives you an overview of what the Hackmatack area has to offer: prairies, wetlands, savanna. Look east to see the tamarack trees for which Hackmatack is named.

- **North Branch Preserve**- McHenry County Conservation District site (11500 North Keystone Road, Richmond, IL)
  Here’s your chance to see an extensive, well-established prairie restoration. This is what the Perricone and Turner tracts will look like as they mature. Prairies such as found here provide vital habitat for grassland-dependent birds such as the Henslow's sparrow, Short-eared owl, Upland sandpiper and Dickcissel. The North Branch of Nippersink Creek runs through this site. Corridors along Nippersink Creek will be used to link the core areas of Hackmatack NWR.

- **Peterkin Pond**- Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources site [http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages/](http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages/)
  Sandhill cranes flock to this 24-acre wetland during their spring and fall migrations. Best viewing is at dusk or dawn from White Pigeon Rd, Walworth County WI

For more information, visit:
USFWS official Hackmatack NWR webpage at [www.fws.gov/refuge/Hackmatack/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Hackmatack/)
Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge webpage at [hackmatacknwr.org](http://hackmatacknwr.org)
The Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge boundary employs a Cores and Corridors concept for wildlife preservation with a focus on migratory and grassland birds. Four core areas will be protected alongside existing conservation lands held by other partners including the McHenry County Conservation District and Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources. Tributaries of Nippersink Creek will serve as wildlife corridors to connect most of the core areas. It is hoped that corridors at least 600 feet wide can be protected in these areas by working with local landowners.