



**Welcome to Silverwood Educational Nature Trail,
sponsored by Edgerton Gifts for Kids and Friends of Silverwood Park.
Follow the station directions and search for additional information by
scanning the QR codes.**



As you enter by the trail sign how many *shagbark hickory* trees do you see?



You will pass an *oak* and *hickory* tree on your left/east and *raspberry* and



gooseberry bushes on your right/west.

Station 1:

- You will see seven trees on the right/west side of the trail. Do you know what they are?



Left to right: *cherry*, *cherry*, *hickory*, *cherry*, *hickory*, *oak*, *hickory*.

- To your left (east) You will find two young “hugging” *hickory* trees.
- Seven steps down the trail you will come to an old *oak* tree. Look at the bottom and see the green *moss*. Feel how soft it is.



- Turn and look to the right (west) look at the deep kettle hollowing out the land. A **kettle (kettle hole, pothole)** is a depression/hole in an **outwash** plain formed by retreating **glaciers** or draining **floodwaters**.

Station 2:

- Walk between two large oak trees that have died.



Notice the *moss* growing on them.

There are two different types of *moss*. One is growing on the tree the other is growing on the ground. Which one is softer?

- One tree has a vine growing on it...**do not touch**, it may be poisonous. Here are some poisonous plants:



Poison ivy is the only one that always has three leaves, one on each side and one in the center. They're shiny with smooth or slightly notched edges. The vine is Virginia creeper, which has five leaves and is NOT poisonous.



- One tree has mushrooms growing on it. They are *shelf mushrooms* . **Don't eat them!**

Station 3

- Look left to the south up the hill. You will see the huge towering *oaks* trees scattered in the tree line.



- Look on either side of the trail as you walk. You will find berry bushes and *ferns* .
- You will find raspberries to the north as you walk along the trail.

Station 4

- Just before station 4 you will see two small, crooked *cherry* trees. Look carefully at the big bumps they have on them.



The bumps are called *burls* How many *burls* can you see?

- You will see large *oak* trees to the south and Rice lake to the west. Can you see the kayak/canoe entrance to the lake? Walk out onto the park trail. Travel right/ north. Walk along the park trail.

Station 5



- When in the season (May/June) you will see *mayapples* . Count the clumps. Look back from where you walked. You will notice that you are walking on a ridge. The ridge is high with a good view of the two *kettles* on either side.
- Look west past the *kettle* to Rice Lake. Do you see any wildlife enjoying the lake...ducks, pelicans, swans or people fishing, canoeing, or kayaking?
- Continue north on the Silverwood Park Trail - listen for bird sounds and look for the old *oak* tree with open arms.

Station 6

- You are standing under the old *oak* with open arms. Look on the ground, can you find any nuts or acorns? Look behind the tree you will see *gooseberry* bushes, with berries when in season.



- If you go off the trail to the north, you may find *jack in the pulpit* , *mullen*



, and *shooting star* wildflowers



- Continue on trail and walk around the small “bowing” *cherry* tree.
- Can you find the *mayapples* to the south?

Station 7

- Look to the south and find a large old *shagbark hickory* tree.

Look at the shaggy bark. Walk down and feel it's bark be careful not to pull any off of it.

- Look for more *mayapples* and *mullen*.
- Come back to the trail and walk between the two large *oak* trees. Walk slowly; notice the large roots growing on top of the ground. Notice and feel the *moss* on one of them. Is it soft? Here you can look for nuts - can you see acorns on the ground?
- As you walk along the trail look to the right (south) and find three *cherry* tree sisters. How many have moss growing on them?
- Look for the young brother *hickory* trees next to the sisters. How many young *hickory* trees do you see?
- Continue on and look to the north, high in the trees. How many *burls* can you count?



- Before you climb the hill look to the south you may find *jewel weed* with orange yellow and red flowers, if blooming in mid-summer.

Station 8

- Just before the station 8 sign, on the left (north) find the tall, straight *cherry* tree growing between two old *oak* trees. Look straight up to this sky to its treetops. See that it is growing into the *oak* trees. It is taking light away from the old *oaks* trees and soon will damage their tree limbs. To keep the *oak*



trees safe, the cherry tree has been *girdled* by forest management. Look at the marks low to the ground around its trunk. A chainsaw was taken several times around the trunk to *girdle* the tree. This tree will soon die and become a home for wildlife.

- Can you find the three old *oak* trees lined up in a row?
- While you are climbing up the hill look down on the ground at the *mosses*.

Station 9

- Look to the north (about 30 yards) and find the twin *cherry* trees - how many *burls* do they have?
- Find the hickory stand to the north with young and old *shagbark hickory* trees. The young trees look so much different than their elders.



- Look for the lonely *box elder* tree . This tree has lost much of its bark and a large limb.
- Continue on to find a large patch of grass. This was once a burn pile for invasive plants and trees. When burning was completed forest management planted grass to cover the burn area.

Station 10



- Look at the gulley to the south. This gulley runs all the way west to Rice Lake. Look at the rocks that were piled into the gulley. The rocks were put into the gulley to help with *erosion*. The *erosion* here came from runoff from farm fields. Silverwood fields were farmed conventionally for many years. By changing farming practices to organic along with direction of planting, farmers have created less runoff of farm fields and 90% less erosion of this gully.

Please feel free to share photos of your time at Silverwood on Facebook: Silverwood Park – Dane County, Wisconsin. Thank you for using the Silverwood Educational Nature Trail. We hope you enjoyed your time,

Friends of Silverwood Park and Gifts for Kids

