

# Trails & Nature Preserves Les Cheneaux Region



| KEY |                            |  |                                  |
|-----|----------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
|     | Fishing                    |  | Scenic View/Birdwatching         |
|     | Bicycling                  |  | Skiing (ungroomed unless noted)  |
|     | Canoeing or Kayaking       |  | Swimming                         |
|     | Hunting                    |  | Signs & Maps                     |
|     | Parking                    |  | U.S. Forest Service Land         |
|     | No Signs or Maps           |  | State of MI Land                 |
|     | Motorized Water Access     |  | Little Traverse Conservancy Land |
|     | Non-motorized Water Access |  | The Nature Conservancy Land      |

## Nature Preserves and Trails

- ### 1 Search Bay Hiawatha National Forest

From Hessel, travel approximately 5 miles west on M-134 and take a left on Road #3436. Several trails branch off the main gravel road. For the Forest Service's ski trail, look for a "Ski Trail" sign on the left shortly after leaving M-134; turn left again and park at the trail head. To reach Lake Huron, follow the main gravel road (2.5 miles round trip). There are more trails off of the road for exploring. Take a compass or GPS. Trails are not always clearly marked.
- ### 2 Search Bay Nature Preserve

Purchased in 2008 with funds from the North American Wetland Conservation Act program, this 25-acre preserve includes 4,000 feet of Lake Huron frontage. It adjoins Hiawatha National Forest land. Drive to the east end of the campground and park at a big set of boulders and walk the beach. There is a mini LTC logo sign and LTC rules sign.
- ### 3 Trefry Trail Hiawatha National Forest

Located about 3 miles west of Search Bay, excellent migratory bird habitat, and more than two miles of Lake Huron shore. There are three separate trail options: 1. A 2.2-mile trail through cedar forest and wetlands; 2. A short (0.1 mile) trail to scenic and secluded Loon Lake; 3. Easy half mile trail along old two-tracks to Search Bay. From Hessel, take M-134 west 2.4 miles. Turn left on Pt. Brulee Rd. First trailhead parking is 0.7 miles on right; continue south to Loon Lake Trail and/or follow the fork onto Mertaugh Camp Road. There also is a shoreline parking area on the left 1.1 miles from M-134.
- ### 4 Birge/Mertaugh/Nye Nature Preserve Complex

This 813-acre complex features beautiful wildflowers, excellent migratory bird habitat, and more than two miles of Lake Huron shore. There are three separate trail options: 1. A 2.2-mile trail through cedar forest and wetlands; 2. A short (0.1 mile) trail to scenic and secluded Loon Lake; 3. Easy half mile trail along old two-tracks to Search Bay. From Hessel, take M-134 west 2.4 miles. Turn left on Pt. Brulee Rd. First trailhead parking is 0.7 miles on right; continue south to Loon Lake Trail and/or follow the fork onto Mertaugh Camp Road. There also is a shoreline parking area on the left 1.1 miles from M-134.
- ### 5 Bay City Lake Trail

A complex network of trails laces the woods throughout this section of the Lake Superior State Forest. Bay City Lake recreation area offers rustic campsites. Note outstanding cross-country skiing and snowshoeing routes.

At the blinking light in Hessel on M-134, head north on 3 Mile Road about three miles. Just past the airstrip and golf course, turn left onto Bay City Lake Rd. (Dandelion Trail on some maps). Follow gravel road, taking the left forks to reach the lake. Campsites and parking are along the southern shore.
- ### 6 CLARK TOWNSHIP'S Hessel Beach

Since 1994, this township park offers free parking, a place to carry kayaks and canoes to the water, a sandy swimming beach, picnic tables and benches, and public restrooms. An excellent access point for paddlers who are headed out to the islands.

From the corner of M-134 and S. Pickford Ave/3 Mile Rd, go south into downtown Hessel about two blocks until the street ends at the public marina. Turn right onto Lake St. Go about 600 feet. The township beach has street level parking on the left.
- ### 7 Mackinac Bay and Beaver Dam Sanctuary

Just east of Hessel, off of M-134, is the Mackinac Bay Preserve's handicap-accessible ramp overlooking Lake Huron marsh. This marsh sustains many fish species for part of their life cycles, as well as populations of migratory birds. Just to the east is the Young-Montgomery Preserve. Right across the road from the preserves is the Michigan Nature Association's Beaver Dam Sanctuary, protecting additional plant and wildlife habitat.

From Hessel, head east on M-134 and the preserves are less than 1/2 mile on the right.
- ### 8 Hessel Airport Trail

A multi-use two-track trail runs through the woods between Hessel and Cedarville. Cuts through more than 700 acres of state forest land. Sand, wet areas, and ruts can be challenging. From Cedarville, head west on M-134 to 3-Mile Road. Turn north on 3-Mile Road. Turn right just past the airport onto a gravel road and take south branch of road to a ball diamond for parking. Avoid airport runway and tracks alongside airport. Trail picks up to the north of the ball diamond and winds through the woods around the airport runway and east toward Cedarville.
- ### 9 Clark Township's Snows Heritage Park

This park is situated right behind Clark Township Hall on Blindline Road in Cedarville. Includes a picnic pavilion, ball diamonds, horseshoe pits, and a natural area. Park entrance is south of township hall and marked with signs. A one mile trail is found at north end of park by the horseshoe pits.
- ### 10 William B. Derby Nature Preserve

This 200-acre preserve includes a three-mile figure eight trail loop available through all seasons. The trail meanders through rock gardens, forest, and along the rugged Lake Huron shore. Head south on Four Mile Road off of M-134 to Club Road. Look for signs and parking area on the left.
- ### 11 Sheppard-Hardy Nature Preserve

This 21-acre preserve includes a quarter mile of Lake Huron frontage. This preserve is only accessible by boat. A powerline trail is found on the preserve.



Spring 2021 edition  
Cover photo credit: Sue Bakkila





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|-----|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
|     | Fishing                  |  | Hiking and Snowshoeing           |
|     | Bicycling                |  | Horseback Riding                 |
|     | Canoeing or Kayaking     |  | Hunting                          |
|     | Parking                  |  | Swimming                         |
|     | Scenic View/Birdwatching |  | Signs & Maps                     |
|     | Trails Not Marked        |  | Motorized Water Access           |
|     | No Signs or Maps         |  | Non-Motorized Water Access       |
|     | U.S. Forest Service Land |  | Little Traverse Conservancy Land |
|     | State of MI Land         |  | The Nature Conservancy Land      |

### Public Camping in the Les Cheneaux Area

shown from west to east on map

- A Search Bay** (Rustic camping in the Hiawatha National Forest) About 4 miles west of Hessel, on Road 3436 off M-134, take the road south to the lake and turn either left or right at the end of the road to the camp sites. Almost all are on the water and have fire rings. No outhouses. Beaches and calming views of the lake and shoreline. Fairly private — chances are there will be no one else there in the fall.
- B Bay City Lake Campground** (in the Superior State Forest) About 3 miles north of Hessel, off Three-Mile Road, turn left just past the airport. Sandy trails and camp sites, with many sites situated around the secluded Bay City Lake. Lots of trail to explore, and Hessel's business district is right down the road. The casino and a bar are just north of Bay City Lake Road.
- C Government Island** (Rustic camping; part of Hiawatha National Forest; accessible only by boat) Many sites around the edge of the wooded island, and on the water. Beaches, wooded pathways, breathtaking views of Lake Huron on the outer shore of the island. Two outhouses, and fire rings at some of the sites. There may also be picnic tables at some sites. Closest to Cedarville launch ramp.
- D DeTour State Forest Campground** (Rustic camping) About 21 miles east of Cedarville, along M-134 and one mile east of the DeTour Roadside Park rest area. Camp sites with fire rings, outhouses, and a scenic sandy beach along Lake Huron. A 1.5 mile trail can be found starting between sites 12 & 13.

## Nature Preserves and Trails

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|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| <p><b>12 Aldo Leopold Nature Preserve</b></p> <p>The largest preserve owned by Little Traverse Conservancy, the Leopold Preserve includes 1,683 acres of Marquette Island along with 3.8 miles of Lake Huron shoreline. A contiguous trail from the north to the south end of the preserve to connect with Leopold Landing, owned by Clark Township (see #13). Portions are seasonally wet. Visit <a href="http://www.landtrust.org">www.landtrust.org</a> for updates or download the nature preserve app (see far right). Only accessible by boat.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>13 Leopold Landing on Marquette Island</b></p> <p>Leopold Landing in Duck Bay is a Clark Township property allowing access to the eastern end of the LTC's Aldo Leopold Preserve. There is a dock and a vault toilet. Trail signs delineate a 1.25 mile trail loop close to Duck Bay, but you can go further up the island and preserve on old two tracks. Only accessible by boat.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>14 Seiberling Stewart Nature Preserve</b></p> <p>This 192-acre preserve includes 4,200 feet of Lake Huron shore. A half-mile trail goes from Marquette Bay to the south side of the preserve and the island. Only accessible by boat.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>15 Cedarville Bay Nature Preserve</b></p> <p>A five-acre preserve with 1,000 feet of Lake Huron frontage. No developed trails. Only accessible by boat.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>16 Little LaSalle Preserve on Marquette Island</b></p> <p>This scenic, 96-acre preserve is owned by The Nature Conservancy. Due to limited access, please request a Conservancy staff-led tour to visit here by calling 517.316.0300. Only accessible by boat.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>17 John Arthur Woollam Nature Preserve</b></p> <p>Owned by The Nature Conservancy, this 185-acre preserve features over a mile of trail that leads to 4,300 feet of Lake Huron and includes a forested loop trail. May is one of the best times to see and hear multitudes of migratory songbirds here.</p> <p>From Cedarville (intersection of M-134 and M-129) travel east on M-134 for 6.2 miles and look for the preserve sign on the right/south side of the highway. A parking lot is available at the trailhead.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>18 Carl A. Gerstacker Nature Preserve at Dudley Bay</b></p> <p>Owned by The Nature Conservancy, this more than 1600-acre preserve features nearly three miles of hiking trails to Big and Little Trout Lakes, five miles of Lake Huron shoreline, and two small islands.</p> <p>From Cedarville (the intersection of M-134 and M-129) travel east on M-134 for 12.3 miles and look for the preserve sign on the left/north side of the highway. A parking lot is available at the trailhead.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>19 Low/Sandy/Springer Trails logging roads</b></p> <p>Low and Springer roads are rough dirt roads with many exposed rocks and ruts, for moderately challenging riding. Historic logging and navigation routes. The area is characterized by hardwoods, mixed conifer forest, mature aspen and maple stands, and sandy, rolling landscape.</p> <p>Sandy (Low) Road is 10.4 miles east of the M-129/M-134 intersection on the north side. Heading north, it intersects with Springer Road which goes all the way to M-48.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>20 Ziegler Trail</b></p> <p>This network of historic logging roads provides an interesting, scenic link between M-134 to the south and M-48 to the north. The roads wind through Lake Superior State Forest and some private acreage, so please note "no trespassing" signage when visiting this area. Low, Springer, and Ziegler roads are rough dirt roads used by loggers, but shared by recreational users.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>21 Cranberry Lake Trail</b></p> <p>This trail is roughly 10 miles west of DeTour Village and 15 miles east of Cedarville. Trail heads are on M-48 (just north of M-134 on the right side of M-48) or on the north side of M-134, (just west of the DeTour State Forest Campground Road.) Trail network includes an 8-mile multi-use trail that travels through state forest lands and along scenic Cranberry Lake.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>22 James V. Foster Hartley Lake Nature Preserve</b></p> <p>Donated to Little Traverse Conservancy in 2012, this 120-acre preserve features the 25-acre Hartley Lake. Two tracks allow for access to the preserve, but no developed parking area or trails at this time.</p> <p>From Detour, take S. Caribou Lake Road west for 1.4 miles. Look for preserve sign on the right.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>23 Seymour Bay Nature Preserve</b></p> <p>A 27-acre scenic wetland preserve owned by Little Traverse Conservancy. No developed parking or trails at this time.</p> <p></p> | <p><b>24 DeTour Peninsula Nature Preserve</b></p> <p>Jutting down into Lake Huron, this preserve includes the rich diversity that typifies northern Lake Huron: sand and gravel beach, limestone cobble shore, boreal forest, rich conifer swamp, emerging marsh, and coastal fen. Parking is at Point Road from where you can walk down to the thin tip of the peninsula where you can get to the beach. From Detour, head south one mile on M-134. Turn left onto Point Road and drive .6 mile to parking area.</p> <p></p> |
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The printing of this brochure was underwritten with a grant from the Les Cheneaux Community Foundation along with funding from the Little Traverse Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy.



**Download the app!**

The Little Traverse Conservancy's nature preserve app provides users with accurate, detailed information and interactive maps about LTC preserves that are best suited for outdoor recreation. Regional trails and other useful resources are being added on an ongoing basis.

Search "LTC Explorer" on both Google Play and the Apple App Store.

NOTE: The most updated information about Little Traverse Conservancy preserves can be found at: [www.landtrust.org](http://www.landtrust.org).