

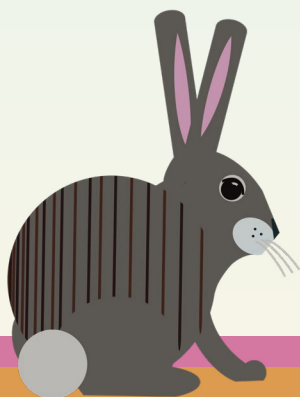


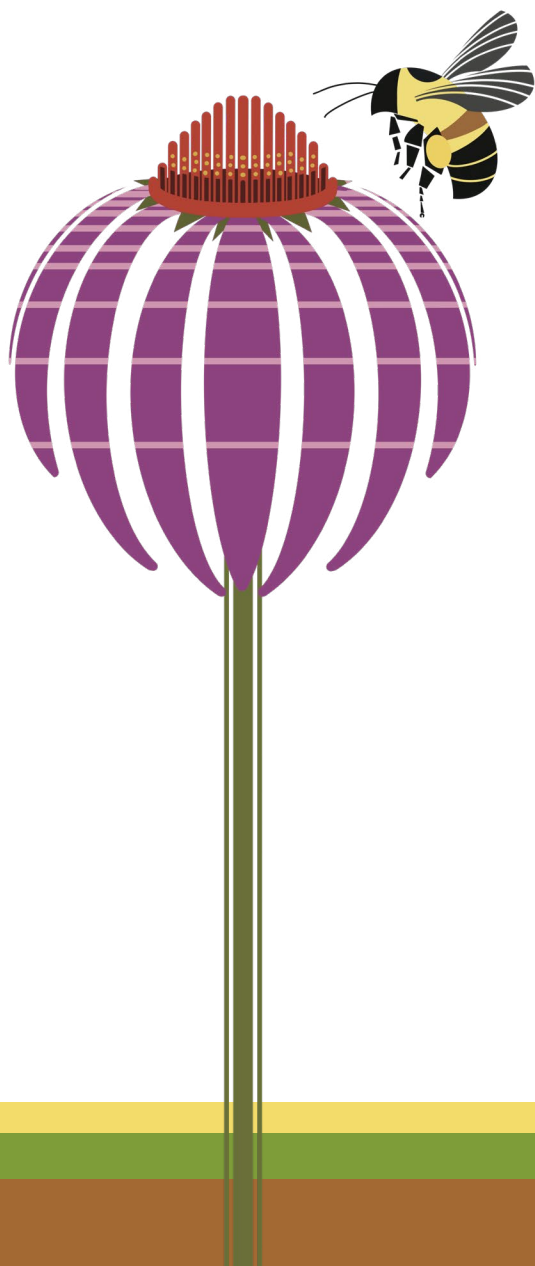
# ***Hello, Nature!***

*Your guide to outdoor fun in  
Bloomington, Edina and Richfield*

Published by Bloomington Public Health

Fall 2025





# Dear reader,

Adventure awaits — right here in Bloomington, Edina and Richfield! Getting outside is a great way to help your body *and* your mind feel better. Join us as we explore our local parks and get moving in the process!

There are so many amazing parks to explore, it can be difficult to know where to start. That's why we made this guide! We've gone on adventures across all three cities to bring you 9 fun ideas to help you feel confident and excited about getting going.

You'll find ways to move, play and enjoy nature. Feeling inspired? Make your own adventure using the parks and resources we've shared in the "City Adventure Sampler" at the back of this guide.

Whether it is a solo adventure or with a friend, it's a good idea to check with a medical provider before starting something new with your body.

We can't wait to see you out in the community!

Bloomington Public Health,  
serving Bloomington, Edina and Richfield



**Mission:** To engage the community in promoting, protecting and improving the health of all.

**Vision:** A healthy community empowered by our locally based support and services.

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# How to use this guide

We made this guide for you, because we wanted to make going outside and moving your body as easy as possible! In the pages that follow, you’ll find:

**Some tips on why and how to get outside**, with notes on the health benefits of outdoor activities and on exercising safely ..... pages 3–5

**Nine suggested adventures** along with suggestions for different ways to move your body and focus your mind! We’ve divided the activities up by type – you’ll find:

Three **walking** adventures ..... pages 6–11

Three **biking** adventures ..... pages 12–17

Three **water** adventures ..... pages 18–23

**A “City Adventure Sampler”** with information about all sorts of resources and locations in Bloomington, Edina and Richfield. If you’re looking for a quick hint on a local splash pad, farmers market or Rec League team, this is the spot for you  
..... pages 25–28

We hope you’ll use this guide and try all the adventures. We’ve tried them ourselves, and we’ve enjoyed them all!



# Movement

Being active outside is great for both your body and your mind! Moving your body regularly can help **prevent or manage** things like **heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes**. It can also **boost your mood, help you move better** and even **make your immune system stronger!**

Before we jump into adventures, we wanted to share a little bit about the benefits of moving our bodies.

Use this guide in a way that works best for you! Feel good walking? Great—keep walking! Want more of a challenge? Try a jog! Not a fan of getting wet? Instead of jumping into the lake, try sitting near water and enjoying a quiet moment.

Just like any great adventure, the most important thing is to have fun!

## *Important considerations*

### **Listen to your body**

It's essential to start slowly and gradually increase the intensity and duration of your movement. Remember it's OK to start slow — especially if you haven't been moving regularly.

### **Consult your doctor**

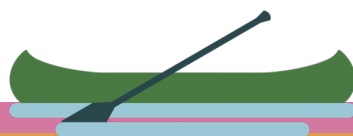
If you have any underlying health conditions or haven't been active in a while, talk to a medical provider before starting a new exercise program.

### **Gear up**

Ensure you have comfortable shoes and clothing appropriate for the weather. Some activities may require other safety equipment like a biking helmet or swim life jacket.

### **Mix it up**

Try different activities and routes to keep your routine interesting and engaging. The more fun you have, the easier moving becomes!



## Why nature?



Access to nature is essential to our **happiness, health and well-being**. Being outside and experiencing nature can **improve our mental and physical well-being**.

And guess what? Nature is closer than you think! There are lots of parks right here in our community where you can move your body and connect with the outdoors.

When people exercise outdoors, they do so for longer periods of time and at greater intensities than they exercise in gyms or at home. Moving outside can help people reach their exercise goals. Even just 5 minutes walking in nature can improve mood, self-esteem, and relaxation. Interacting with a green space increases social interactions, which can prevent diseases like dementia.

Not sure? Join us on an adventure and check it out for yourself!

## Why walk?



Walking is a great way to get around your neighborhood, visit with friends or family, and be healthy at the same time! **We use the term “walking” to include moving with all forms of mobility devices, such as a wheelchair, cane, or walker.** You can walk for a long or short distance, and, with proper clothing and hydration, in all kinds of weather.

For most people, walking does not require any equipment besides their own bodies! Walking can be as simple or challenging as you would like. It is also a great way to get out into nature and take in our surroundings. You can **walk solo and count the number of birds you see**, you can **meet up with a friend and chat**, or you can see **how fast you can complete a loop**.

## Why bike?



Biking or cycling is using a two-wheeled (or sometimes three-wheeled!) device propelled by human power, typically using pedals. Just like plants, bikes come in all shapes and sizes. Biking can be enjoyable if you want to get from point A to point B—or if you just like fresh air in your face while you exercise. **Biking provides a cardiovascular (heart) workout, strengthens muscles, and is a low-impact exercise, making it easier on your joints!**

## *Tips for a smooth ride*

### **Be Predictable**

Travel in a consistent and predictable manner, either on a trail or on the street. Always look behind you before changing position on the trail or road.

### **Don't Block the Trail**

When in a group, avoid using more than half the trail.

### **Keep Right**

For safety, stay to the right of the trail, except when passing another user.

### **Pass on the Left**

Pass others going in your direction on their left. Faster traffic must yield to slower and oncoming traffic.

### **Give Audible Signals when Passing**

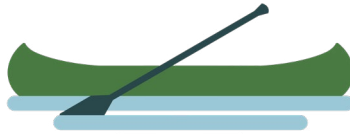
Use a warning such as...“PASSING ON YOUR LEFT.” Give a clear warning by voice, bell or horn.

### **Wear a Helmet**

Bicyclists, skaters and skateboarders should always wear a properly fitted helmet.

### **Stop Means Stop**

Follow stop signs and other traffic laws.



## ***Why water?***

Exercising in or near water can enhance the positive health effects of your workout. Recreational swimming can provide a low-impact workout that keeps your heart rate up but takes some of the impact stress off your body.

A person doesn't have to get wet to benefit from water. Even just being near water can make activities like walking or biking more enjoyable. People who seek out water tend to be more physically active.

Being near water can come with possible risks. It's important to take steps to protect yourself and others, especially children, near water. Be sure to follow local park rules and signage. If you are looking for swimming lessons check out Bloomington, Edina and Richfield's Parks and Rec websites to learn more and sign up!

## *Bloomington Walk*

# ***Bryant Park***



## **WALK**

Want to visit a freshly updated and accessible city park with paved walking trails, a playground and lots of athletics options? Pop into Bryant Park, where a quick walk takes you by two ponds with wooded islands, a skate park, tennis and basketball courts, a cricket pitch and more! Freshly updated in 2025, this park is a great destination for a stroll, with winding pathways inside and around the park.

## **LOOK**

Look for stepping stones to take you across the stream between the two ponds. The northern end of the park is a restored wetland, where runoff water from 372 acres in Bloomington collects and filters out sediment on the way to Nine Mile Creek. If you'd like to get closer to the water, the park's stepping stone paths offer a fun way to explore while keeping your feet dry.

## **HEALTHY BODY**

From the parking lot and park shelter, follow the path with the playground on your right, and then the skate park on your left. You can choose different paths through the park—for a 30-minute loop, follow the winding and partially-shaded path by the park's two small ponds, then take the sidewalks back along the edges of the park on Aldrich St. and 84th St. Or bring along your basketball, tennis racket, hockey gear or skateboard to take advantage of the park's other facilities!

## **HEALTHY MIND**

Lots of studies have shown that connecting with nature offers big benefits for your mood and brain functioning. One way to deepen your connection with nature is to get to know some local plants by name. Try downloading a plant, bird or animal ID app (we like iNaturalist, which does all three, and tracks data for biodiversity studies!) and take your phone out in Bryant Park's restored wetlands. Try picking out a different grass, tree, or bird to ID every time you come to the park—and then keep an eye out for similar plants and animals in other places you pass through!





## Fast Facts



### Trail

Several of Bryant Park's trails lead directly to neighboring streets, or park in one of the park's two parking lots.



### Time

Full park path/sidewalk loop is about 30 mins, or take a shorter stroll.



### Facilities

Restrooms, off-street parking, park shelter with indoor and shaded areas, baseball/softball field, cricket pitch, playground, basketball court, outdoor hockey rink/dog run, skate park, hammock area



### Play

Bryant Park's redesign includes Bloomington's first fully inclusive playground, designed with a wide range of abilities in mind in consultation with both local residents and experts on physical, mental and sensory disabilities. For older kids (and adults), there are also a skatepark built with beginners in mind, tennis courts, a basketball court, a baseball/softball field and an outdoor hockey rink/dog run



### Accessibility

Wheelchair accessible parking lots, paved walking trail (stroller, cane, and wheelchair friendly); fully-accessible playground and park shelter building



### Parking

Bryant Park has an accessible parking lot on Bryant Ave. between 85th and 86th St., or a smaller lot on the corner of Emerson Ave. and 84 1/2 St.



### Questions?

Check the [Bryant Park page](#) for updates

*Edina Walk*

## **Bredesen Park**



### **WALK**

Looking for a quiet wooded spot with a variety of trail surfaces for walking or biking? Check out the three concentric trails winding around Bredesen Park's set of small lakes. You have a choice of an unpaved nature trail, a paved walking trail or a partially-paved and boardwalk bike trail where you can zip through the park's trees and wetlands, getting a balance of sun and shade.

### **LOOK**

Keep your eyes peeled for wood-carved tree ID signs, which show leaf shapes for a few different native trees. This is also a great spot for birdwatching, especially near the wooden bird houses along the walk. On a summer walk at Bredesen Park, you might expect to see bluejays, woodpeckers, red-winged blackbirds and more.

### **HEALTHY BODY**

The park offers a chance to move at your own pace—you might want to take a leisurely stroll down the nature trail, which veers closest to the park's small duck- and turtle-filled lakes. That trail offers plenty of shaded park benches both along the trail and a little way off down side paths. If a faster walk or jog is more your style, hit the two-mile loop of the paved walking path. Or, if you'd prefer to tackle this park on bike, you can fly through the tree canopy on the bike path's raised boardwalk sections.

### **HEALTHY MIND**

Bredesen Park is the perfect place for a Forest Bathing session! Shinrin-yoku is the Japanese practice of forest-based mindfulness. If practiced regularly, studies suggest that forest meditation—or even just spending time among trees—can improve your mood, working memory and heart rate variability. Try some forest bathing meditation: take a seat and pay attention to your breath. If something distracts you from your breath, simply notice the distraction without judgment, then return your focus to your breath. Even five or ten minutes of this kind of meditation, done regularly, can make a difference!



## Fast Facts



### Trail

Park in the lot off Olinger Boulevard and set out on the nature trail, walking trail or bike trail—you'll see signs for all three. The walking trail is 2 miles long and paved, the nature trail a little shorter and unpaved.



### Time

The Nature Trail (a bit under two miles) takes about seventy minutes at a steady pace, allowing time for admiring the birds and resting on one of the trailside benches



### Facilities

Restrooms and water fountains near the parking lot



### Winter fun

Restrooms are open year-round



### Accessibility

Paved walking trail (stroller and cane friendly)



### Parking

Large, off-street lot



### Questions?

Find Bredeesen Park's location and trail map at [Edina's Park Finder website](#).

## **Veterans Park**



### **WALK**

Looking for an outdoor adventure that offers not just walking trails and views, but also a wide variety of outdoor activities? Check out Veterans Park, where you can walk the loop around the lake, take your kids to the playground, hit a round of mini-golf, shop the Saturday morning Farmer's Market, fish from the dock and grab a treat from the snack bar—all within a few minute's walk.

### **LOOK**

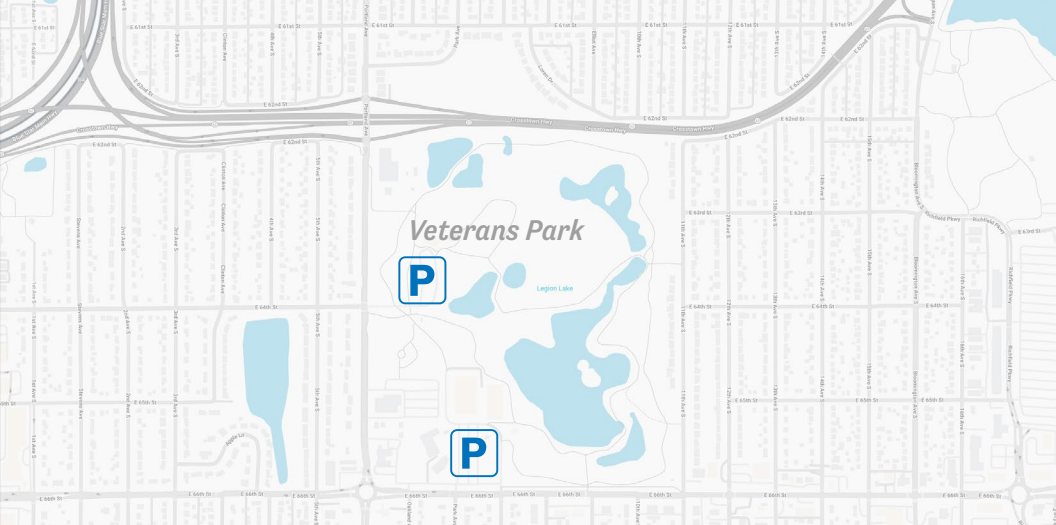
Keep your eyes peeled for the park's waterfall! (Hint: it's over in the mini-golf course!)

### **HEALTHY BODY**

Walk the 1.4-mile lake trail, which takes you through wetlands. If you come to the park on a Sunday in May to October, you can combine your outdoor exercise with some shopping at Richfield Farmer's Market, which is held right in the park! Pick up some vegetables and locally-prepared healthy snacks or lunch, or grab an ice coffee to enjoy on your stroll! Or, for winter fun all year long, find year-round hockey and skate classes at Richfield Ice Arena, which also has a Winter Walking Track for strolls out of the elements.

### **HEALTHY MIND**

Have you ever tried walking meditation? Here's a short set of prompts to turn your next walk into a meditation session. Walking at a regular pace, or a bit slower than you would normally walk, pay attention to the feeling of your feet on the ground. If it helps to have something to focus on, count your steps—meditation teachers usually recommend counting up to 10, then starting again at 1. Once you've focused on your feet on the trail for a while, shift your attention to your senses, focusing on one sense at a time: hearing, smell, sight, touch. After you've walked a bit with a focus on each sense, bring your attention back to the feeling of your feet on the ground.



## *Fast Facts*



### **Trail**

The Walking Loop is 1.4 miles, and is accessible for all levels; you can also branch off onto other trails at several points. There's a mounted map of the whole park at the parking lot, including both trails and attractions.



### **Time**

About an hour at a slow pace, plus time for other park activities



### **Facilities**

Restrooms in snack bar, playground, sand volleyball court, community garden, picnic pavillion with tables, bandshell, mini golf and bike surrey rental, swimming pool, ice arena



### **Play**

Play area features a rope climbing structure and zipline, plus slides, swings, a kids' climbing wall and more! You could also visit the outdoor pool complex, with its waterslide, zero-depth-entry wading pool, water polo courts and lap lanes.



### **Accessibility**

Wheelchair accessible parking lot, paved walking trail (stroller and cane friendly), 10 holes in mini-golf course are accessible for people with limited mobility



### **Parking**

Lots on the west side of the park (Portland Ave. and 64th St.) or on the south side (66th St.). For access to the walking trail, playground and mini-golf, enter the park from Portland Avenue. For the pool and ice arena, enter from 66th St.



### **Questions?**

Check the [Veterans Park page](#) for updates on hours, conditions, and rentals

## *Hyland Park Trails*



### **BIKE**

Want to pedal through woods and prairies, up and down gently sloping hills, along lakes and over wetland boardwalks? Check out Hyland Park's 8.6 miles of looping bike trails. Smoothly paved and designed so you can easily tackle two to three loops in a morning's ride, the trails at Hyland Park connect to the larger Hyland Trail system, leading south to the Minnesota River along Bush Lake Road and north to Tierney's Woods and Bush Lake.

### **LOOK**

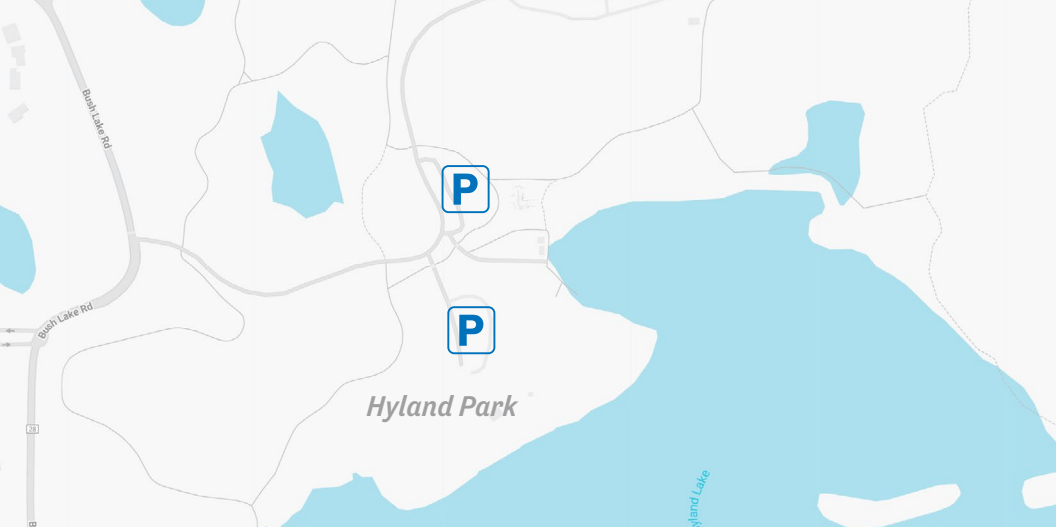
Stop by Richardson Nature Center to visit the raptors in their indoor-outdoor habitats. You can also meet Richardson's resident reptiles and amphibians and check out the active beehives out the second-floor windows.

### **HEALTHY BODY**

Want to work up a sweat? Park at the southernmost parking lot along Bush Lake Road and take the loop through restored prairie and the Sumac Knoll group camp site, then head north along one or more of the loops to the west of Hyland Lake, all the way to the turtle basking pond and back down by a trail you haven't yet biked.

### **HEALTHY MIND**

Studies have shown that just gazing at bodies of water can help lower your heart rate and blood pressure and increase feelings of relaxation. Spend five minutes looking out at the water of one of the park's lakes—we recommend taking a break at one of the fishing docks on Bush Lake or, on a rainy day, looking out at the small pond from a rocking chair by the window on the second floor of Richardson Nature Center.



## *Fast Facts*



### **Bike access**

You can get on bike trails by any of the park's entrances and parking lots; we prefer the lots on the western side of the park along Bush Lake Road



### **Time**

Great for a quick 1-hour sprint or a longer and more leisurely ride



### **Facilities**

Restrooms in Visitor Center and Richardson Nature Center, several parking lots, park concessions at Visitor Center, picnic area, boat launches, disc golf course



### **Play**

Hyland Play Area, near the visitor's center, has won awards for its design, with both lots of climbing structures and slides, and lots of benches for parents to chat while kids play.



### **Accessibility**

Both paved and unpaved paths, accessible restrooms, park benches. Richardson Nature Center has sensory support kits and staff who have received training from the Autism Society of Minnesota.



### **Parking**

There are seven parking lots in total in the Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve system: two by Normandale Lake, one by Richardson Nature Center, three by Bush Lake, and one by Hyland Lake.



### **Questions?**

Check the [Three Rivers Park Hyland Lake Park Preserve page](#) for detailed maps and updates on hours, conditions, and equipment rentals.

*Edina Bike*

## **Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail**



### **BIKE**

Want to experience scenic wetlands, peaceful woods and charming city connections—all in one ride? Hop on your bike and hit the Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail, a 15-mile gem that winds through Edina between Bloomington and Hopkins. Whether you're a casual cruiser or a weekend warrior, this trail offers a fun, car-free way to soak up the sights. Nine Mile Creek Trail is even plowed during the winter for cold-weather bikers!

### **LOOK**

In Edina, the trail shows off some of its best views, gliding past lush wetlands and shaded forest stretches. The elevated boardwalks give you a breezy ride over the creek that inspired the trail's name. It's part nature escape, part city adventure.

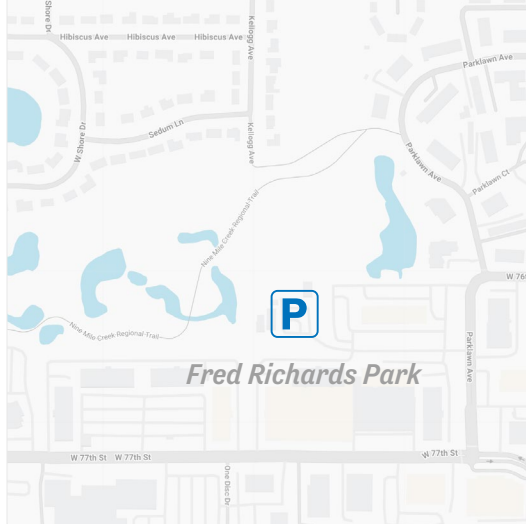
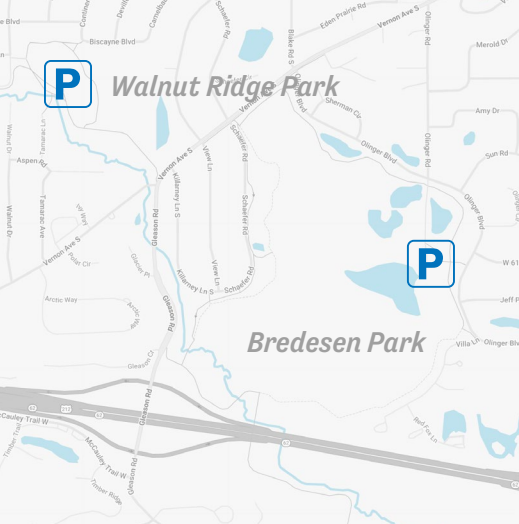
### **HEALTHY BODY**

Bike a few or all of this trail's fifteen miles, or for an even longer ride, link up with one of the three other bike trails that Nine Mile Creek connects with: Cedar Lake Regional Trail (to the chain of lakes in Uptown Minneapolis), Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail (to Chanhassen and Chaska) or Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail (to Lake Nokomis in South Minneapolis).

### **HEALTHY MIND**

Biking comes with a whole range of mental health benefits, from improved mood and lower stress due to the body's production of endorphins to a sharper mind and a stronger connection with nature. On your bike ride, focus on the scenery you pass by: the leaves (or, in the winter, the bare branches) of the trees. Then focus on the feeling of the air, sun, or rain on the skin of your face. Take a moment to appreciate your body's ability to move you through these beautiful landscapes.





## Fast Facts



### Bike access

Park at Walnut Ridge Park, at Fred Richards Park or on the east side of Bredesen Park—all three offer easy parking access to the trail. Note that parking at Bredesen Park is on the east side of the park, while the trail is on the south side—you can access the trail with a quick zip through the park



### Time

Choose your own adventure—short cruise or full-day ride



### Facilities

Year-round restrooms at Bredesen Park



### Play

Plenty of parks along the way to pause, play, or picnic



### Accessibility

Fully paved trail, including smooth boardwalk stretches



### Parking

In Edina, park at Walnut Ridge Park or Bredesen Park; there are also two parking lots each in Richfield and Hopkins; see the trail's website (below) for more information



### Bonus

Looking for more thrill? Try the 8.9 miles of mountain bike trails at Braemar Park—great for all skill levels!

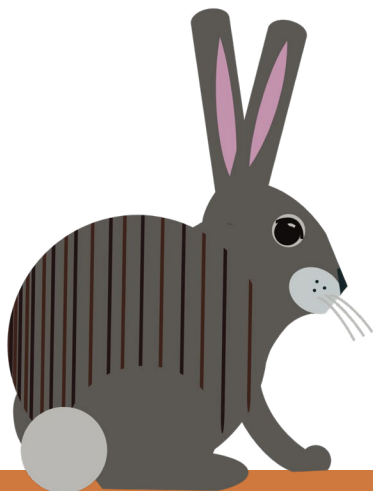


### Questions?

Check the [Three Rivers Park Nine Mile Creek Trail](#) page for updates on hours, trail conditions, and more.

*Richfield Bike*

## **Taft Bike Park**



### **BIKE**

Who says all bike rides need to happen on a miles-long, paved trail? Taft Bike Park is your go-to spot for off-road biking fun—no long drive or remote trail required! With the park's compact layout, you can watch riders of all ages and skill levels take on the course at the same time. And take advantage of the lights that allow night biking! Whether you're just learning or a seasoned rider, there's something here for everyone.

### **LOOK**

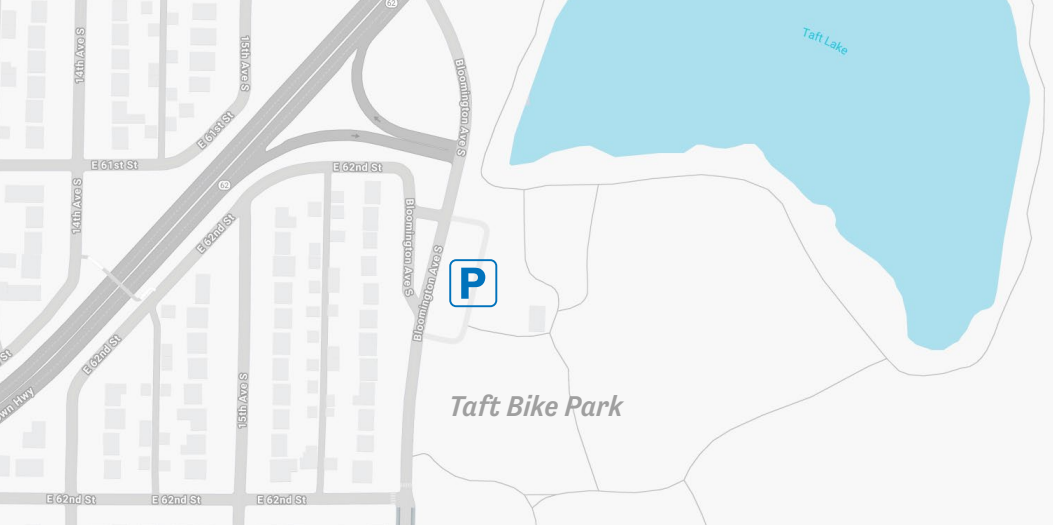
Keep your eye peeled for animal friends around the park! Depending on the time of year of your visit, you might see deer, monarch butterflies or big crowds of Canada geese. In the late spring and early summer, you might see fuzzy gray Canada Goose chicks or adolescents.

### **HEALTHY BODY**

Taft Bike Park is like a skate park for bikes, offering multiple kinds of off-road biking in a small footprint. Try your skills biking up and down or across berms, rock features, rollers, and jumps. You can also try out the pump track, which is designed to be navigated on a bike without pedaling—just “pumping” your body up and down! There's also a smaller pump track for kids, sloped wood decking, and more. The park offers both a beginner-level and an intermediate trail, so you can build up your skills and take on new challenges.

### **HEALTHY MIND**

When you're done catching air on the bike park, why not catch a fish? Taft Lake's fishing dock is close to the bike park, and accessible from the same parking lot. Regular recreational fishing has been shown to lower stress and improve mood in scientific studies, with greater health benefits for more frequent fishing. Spend an hour or two on the lake with your fishing pole, enjoying the fresh air!



## Fast Facts



### Bike access

Taft Bike Park is right next to the parking lot at 62nd Street & Bloomington Avenue on the west side of Taft Park. Also right off this parking lot is a playground, a lake with a fishing dock and a 1 mile walking loop around the little lake. You can also access Taft Park using the Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Bike Trail.



### Time

A quick half-hour spin around the track or a few hours biking, fishing and playing



### Facilities

Fishing dock, picnic areas, bike track, boat launch, restroom, baseball diamonds, basketball court



### Play

There are two playgrounds: a climbing structure for older kids and a tot-friendly playground right next to the bike track



### Accessibility

Wheelchair-accessible parking lot; Taft Park also has an accessible dock that allows wheelchair users to transfer to kayaks in Taft Lake using a system of rollers



### Parking

If the main parking lot off Bloomington Ave. is full, there's also a parking lot to the south of the park on East 63rd St.

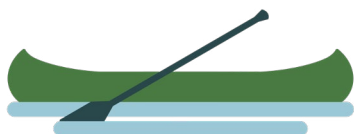


### Questions?

Check the [Taft Bike Park page](#) for park rules. Helmets required. The bike park is closed on rainy days.

*Bloomington Water*

## ***Bush Lake Beach***



### **SWIM**

So much summer fun right off one parking lot? Yes, really. Bush Lake Beach is a top-tier spot for a quick dip or a full day in the sun. Swim in the clear, calm lake, dig into the sandy shoreline or relax under one of the iconic bright blue shade umbrellas.

### **LOOK**

If swimming and boating are not really your thing, why not take a lakeside stroll on the walking path that wraps around the lake? It's a great spot for views of waterfowl, trees and the sun glinting off the water.

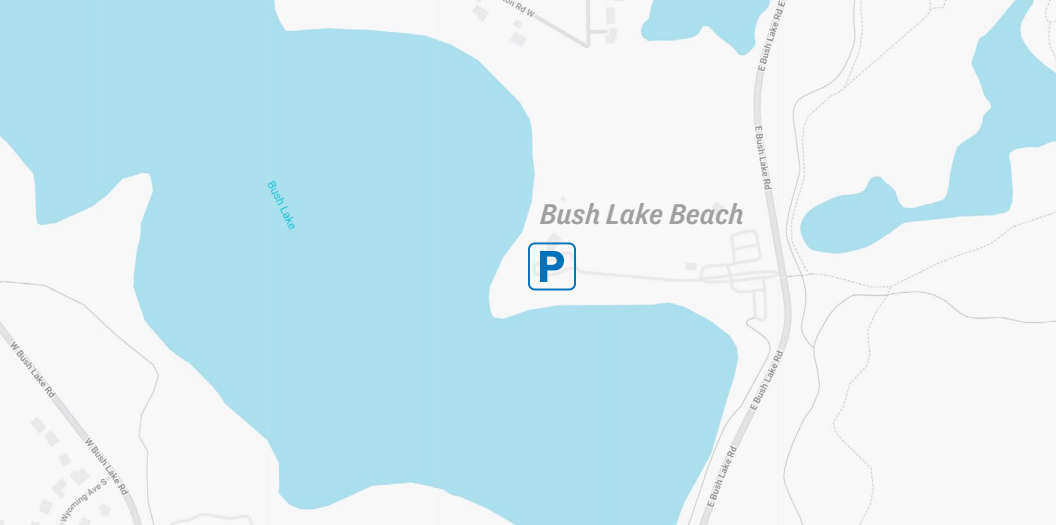
### **HEALTHY BODY**

Feeling adventurous? Rent a kayak from the new Paddle Share station, conveniently located next to the small playground and boat dock just left of the beach. Reserve your kayak here or use the posted QR code at the rental station.

<https://www.ipaddleport.com/bush-lake-beach-bloomington-mn>

### **HEALTHY MIND**

Spending time with loved ones can be great for not just your mood and lowering your stress levels, but also for your brain health in general—studies have shown that time spent socializing can strengthen neural pathways that keep you sharp, especially in later life. What better way to spend time with friends or family than a day at the beach? Rent the picnic shelter for a large family gathering or just come with a friend to paddle, float or picnic on the shady lawn by the beach!



## *Fast Facts*



### **Water access**

Designated swimming beach (no lifeguards), kayak rentals via Paddle Shared



### **Time**

Great for a quick 1-hour splash or a full-day hang



### **Facilities**

Restrooms, changing area, drinking fountain, picnic tables, reservable shelter



### **Play**

Small playground, sandy beach for digging and castle-building



### **Accessibility**

Paved paths to beach, accessible restrooms, shaded seating options



### **Parking**

Free lot right next to the beach (fills quickly on hot days), just off E Bush Lake Rd.



### **Bonus**

The big shady lawn behind the lot is great for picnics and games!

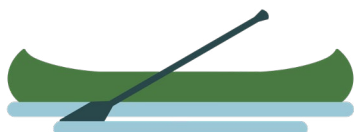


### **Questions?**

Check the [Bush Lake page](#) for park info, reservations and rentals

*Edina Water*

## ***Centennial Lakes***



### ***BOAT/SKATE***

Tucked just behind the hustle of the strip mall, Centennial Lakes Park is a charming escape hiding in plain sight. Don't be fooled by the parking lot—just head toward the back and you'll find winding waterways, landscaped gardens and plenty of fun just waiting to happen. Paddle the afternoon away on either the cheerful duck and swan paddleboats (Duck, Duck and Gray Duck) or a sparkly traditional paddleboat. And when winter hits? That same waterway transforms into one of the Twin Cities' most magical ice skating spots.

### ***LOOK***

Grab a seat on one of the park benches—or swings—next to the water to watch actual baby ducks paddling by! With nearby cafés, restaurants and coffee shops, this is an easy and scenic summer (or winter!) stop.

### ***HEALTHY BODY***

After your boat ride, you've got options. Play a round of golf on the putting course, stroll the 1.4 miles of paved lakeside paths or try your hand at lawn bowling on Centennial Lakes Park's Lawn Games area—lawn bowling equipment is included in the hourly rental fee.

### ***HEALTHY MIND***

Just north of Parkland Avenue on the east side of the park's chain of lakes, you'll find a brick labyrinth. Labyrinth-walking is a form of meditation that goes back at least 4,000 years and has been practiced all over the world. Starting at the outside of the labyrinth, take slow, small steps along a path toward the center, paying attention to your breath. Then follow the same path back out. "We aren't quite sure where the path is leading, but it always does lead forward," says Reverend Megan Holding of the labyrinth meditation.



## Fast Facts



### Water access

From France Avenue, turn off on Plaza Drive and park in the large shopping center parking lot or ramp. It's just a quick walk into the park and across the bridge to the paddle boats (summer), and to ice skating (winter).



### Time

1-hour paddle boat rental or lawn bowling game, or linger longer on foot (or skates!)



### Facilities

Restrooms by the Fountain Plaza entrance, drinking fountain, picnic tables, reservable shelter



### Play

Paddle boats, park swings, 18 hole putting course, lawn bowling, fishing pole rentals.



### Accessibility

Fully paved trail loops around the lakes



### Parking

Free shaded parking garage adjacent to the park

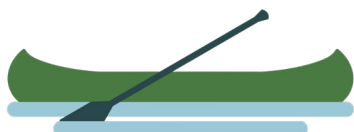


### Questions?

Check the [Centennial Lakes Park page](#) for current paddle boat rentals, skating updates, and event info

## Wood Lake Nature Center

**Note:** The Wood Lake Nature Center will be under construction from May 2025 to late fall 2026, but the park will be open during that time! Watch for signs in case of changes to parking.



### WALK

Craving a quick escape? Wood Lake Nature Center has flat, shady trails, birds galore, turtles and prairie views. It's an easy, nature-filled walk that's wheelchair- and cane-friendly, kid-friendly, stroller-ready and full of surprises. The star: a scenic wooden boardwalk across the lake, with turtle sightings and red-winged blackbird serenades. Come in the winter, too, for the great cross-country skiing and snowshoeing!\*

### LOOK

Wood Lake is a major birdwatching destination: over 200 species of birds have been spotted in the park! Keep an eye out, also, for the lake's painted turtle population: on one summer walk, we counted 22 turtles close to the trail. Don't miss the Chronolog station on the boardwalk—snap a photo to join a cool citizen science project.

### HEALTHY BODY

Hit the Boardwalk Trail (just under a mile): from the parking lot, turn right, then keep left at every fork to stay on the loop. The trail starts and ends in the shade, with benches every few minutes. For a longer walk, instead of crossing the lake at the boardwalk, continue on the Prairie Trail, which winds through wetlands and into the park's restored prairie. Or, in the winter, rent skis at the Nature Center and warm up with the 2-mile cross-country-ski loop! The center also leads guided naturalist snowshoe hikes in the winter—enjoy the snow and see the winter wildlife!

### HEALTHY MIND

Many studies suggest that outdoor activities like birding can offer significant mental health benefits, including mood boosts and helping with working memory. Wood Lake Nature Center is a perfect place to start your birding journey! Check out the park's regularly offered Bird Hikes to learn about local species, or check out a birding guide at the local library and work on identifying species on your own.

*\*Trail access and closures will change throughout the construction project, please check the Wood Lake website or call the nature center staff to get up to date trail information.*





### Fast Facts



Boardwalk Trail – 0.8 miles (crushed limestone, boardwalk, a short paved stretch), or take the Prairie Trail (1.7 miles) to the Perimeter Trail (1.8 miles) for a longer walk that takes you through the park’s restored prairie. In the winter, snowshoe on the walking trails or make the 2-mile loop around on the cross-country Ski Trail



The Boardwalk Trail takes about 40 mins at a slow, stop-and-look pace



Restrooms (port-a-potties during construction), water fountain, picnic pavilion,  
Hammock Station (No water or electricity on site during construction)



Check out the Nature Play Area, which turns the materials of the woods (trees, sticks, stones and, depending on recent rains/snowmelt, water) into tools for creative play! It's well-shaded, and has benches for parents to rest and chat.



Smooth, flat trails; 7 accessible parking spots; stroller- and cane-friendly; accessible picnic tables



Wood Lake's parking lot is at 6710 Lake Shore Drive.



Check the [Wood Lake Nature Center page](#) for updates on hours, conditions, and equipment rentals—or, for more up-to-the-minute info, call the nature center at 612-861-9365



# ***City Adventures Sampler***

## *Winter Activities*

### **Bloomington**

Sled and skate at [Brookside Park](#)

### **Edina**

Take a walk on the indoor track at [Braemar Field](#)

### **Richfield**

Check out the affordable cross country ski and snowshoe rentals at [Wood Lake Nature Center](#)

## *Outdoor Pools*

### **Bloomington**

Zip down a waterslide or scale the aquatic climbing wall at [Bloomington Family Aquatic Center](#)

### **Edina**

Take advantage of the dedicated morning lap swim times, jump off the zipline or ride the waves in the Lost Wave Surf Simulator at [Edina Aquatic Center](#)

### **Richfield**

Bring your little ones to designated tot times Monday-Saturday mornings, or come for the adult lap swim at [Richfield Pool](#)

## *Rest & Relaxation Spots*

### **Bloomington**

Sit under a tree or on a bench while watching Nine Mile Creek flow by in [Moir Park](#)

### **Edina**

Paddle boat and float your worries away at [Centennial Lake Park](#)

### **Richfield**

Slow walk the loop around the lake and visit with the calm water at [Richfield Lake](#)

## *Produce (Farmers Markets)*

### **Bloomington**

Stop by [Bloomington Farmers' Market](#) on a Saturday morning—or check out their Wednesday night Midweek Music and Market series in the summer

### **Edina**

Pick up bread, vegetables or a quick meal at [Centennial Lakes Park Farmer's Market](#) on Thursday afternoons from June to early October

### **Richfield**

Pick up fruit, sweets and more at [Richfield Farmer's Market](#) on Saturday mornings, May through October



## *Outdoor Concert Series*

### **Bloomington**

[Normandale Lake Bandshell](#) hosts music series on summer nights; check out [Bloomington's Arts in the Parks](#) for these and other schedules

### **Edina**

Maetzold Amphitheater in [Centennial Lakes Park](#) hosts concerts several nights a week, with morning kids' concerts, too!

### **Richfield**

Entertainment in the Parks runs a summer season of concerts in [Veterans Park Bandshell](#)

## *Unconventional Sports*

### **Bloomington**

Bring your frisbees over to the [Moir Park Disc Golf Course](#)

### **Edina**

Check out the championship-level lawn bowling courts at [Centennial Lakes Park](#)

### **Richfield**

Hit a hole-in-one at [Wheel Fun Rentals Mini Golf at Veterans Park](#) or bring your skateboard to [Augsburg Skatepark](#)

## *Splash Pads*

### **Bloomington**

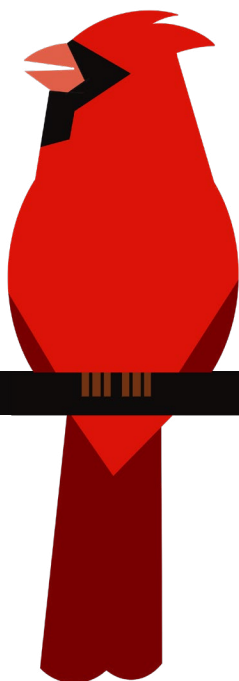
[Cedarcrest Splashpad](#)

### **Edina**

[Edina Aquatic Center](#)

### **Richfield**

[Richfield Pool and Splash Pad](#)



## *Things to rent in parks*

### **Bloomington**

[Bloomington Parks & Recreation](#) rents affordable community garden plots, with fee assistance for qualifying residents. Sign-up for returning gardeners is in February; to get a plot or join the waiting list, look for a sign-up in early March

### **Edina**

Duck, Duck and Gray Duck are the three duck- and swan-shaped paddleboats at [Centennial Lakes Park](#)

### **Richfield**

Glide down snow-covered trails on cross-country skis rented from [Wood Lake Nature Center](#)

## *Places to play on a rainy day*

### **Bloomington**

Visit with the birds and turtles at [Richardson Nature Center](#)—or take in one of their naturalist programs

### **Edina**

Slide, climb and explore in the large indoor playground at [Edinborough Park](#)

### **Richfield**

Get out on the ice at or walk the track at [Richfield Ice Arena](#)

## *Indoor Ice Skating*

### **Bloomington**

[Bloomington Ice Garden](#)

### **Edina**

[Braemar Arena](#)

Extra Credit- This winter, take advantage of the amazing outdoor skating at

[Centennial Lakes Park](#)

### **Richfield**

[Richfield Ice Arena](#)

## *Off-Leash Dog Parks*

### **Bloomington**

[Nesbitt Ave and W 111th St](#)

### **Edina**

[Van Valkenberg Park](#)

### **Richfield**

[Roosevelt Park](#)

## *Make new friends! (Rec league sports)*

### **Bloomington**

Gym class days don't need to end just because you're a grownup! Join the

[Adult Kickball League](#)

### **Edina**

Work up a sweat this winter in a [Volleyball, Pickleball, Basketball, or Hockey League](#)

### **Richfield**

Join the [Adult Doubles Pickleball League](#) with your spouse or friend!



