

Hike these 5 great Wisconsin trails

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**By WisconsinGuide Magazine**

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A good hike can be great exercise, a ritual to calm the spirit, a chance to connect with the earth. It is a way to get to know nature by its species, and your soul by its moods. It is an opportunity to build a friendship, acknowledge your heritage or confront your personal limits. Wisconsin has many great hiking trails. Here are five to soothe your psyche and stretch your tendons.

As a kid, the farm dogs and I would set foot onto a gravel road, which led us to the hilly driveway of an abandoned farm. Then we'd follow a tractor-flattened swath of field that eventually linked up with the woods.

We'd disappear onto a path that had been cleared of roots and limbs many years earlier, swat at a few deer flies and end up in a small cornfield that was surrounded by towering trees - cedars, tamaracks, maples - their rustling a splendid accompaniment on a breezy day. This was the Sheboygan County Marsh, and my father owned 30 acres of it during most of his adult life.

Today this wildlife area is 13,000 acres. Most still is wilderness and low-profile. There's a push to designate it as an archaeological site on the National Register of Historic Places. For more, call 920-876-2535.

Want to climb as high as you can? Then go to Price County and Timm's Hill, which at 1,952 feet above sea level is the highest summit in the state. Find it on County Trunk C, off Highway 86, not far from Rib Lake.

The hiking trail, which can be picked up on C, is 6 miles, roundtrip.

Climb the observation tower and get an overview of the area's topography. People who want to avoid hilly hiking can walk shorter loops on level ground and approach Timm's and Pearson lakes. For details, call 800-269-4505.

Point Beach State Forest, Manitowoc County, has 10 miles of wooded trails that lead to Lake Michigan, plus 6 miles of sandy beach for walking (easy trekking, and a particularly nice setting for romantic

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interludes).

It is possible to walk on the beach to Two Rivers, which would take a couple of hours. You also can walk up to, but not into, Rawley Point Lighthouse, whose beacon can be seen almost 20 miles from shore. The structure has been around since 1894. For more, call 920-794-7480.

Big Manitou Falls, south of Superior, is the state's highest waterfall. It is 165 feet, a part of the Black River and the highlight of Pattison State Park, which is on Highway 35.

A 1.5-mile hiking trail takes visitors into the gorge behind the falls; it is a one-way path, not a loop, so prepare to do an about-face after your descent. There also are scenic overlooks, and a cousin - Little Manitou Falls - can be seen by following the river about 4.5 miles. Interfalls Lake separates the two waterfalls. For more, call 715-399-8073.

Perrot State Park, just west of Trempealeau, would be a great place to hike when the Grand Excursion 2004 flotilla of steamboats and other watercraft fills the neighboring Mississippi River shortly before Independence Day. (For more about that event, go to [www.grandexcursion.com](http://www.grandexcursion.com).)

There are 12 miles of hiking trails that follow the river or rise above it to provide panoramic views. Visitors can meander atop bluffs or disappear into wooded areas. There are both steep upgrades and easy places to stroll. For more, call 608-534-6409.

I'll remember Perrot for a long time, not just for the gorgeous scenery, but because of the park ranger who roused us from our tent on a summer night after a tornado watch was issued. While being pelted with rain, most of our group hoofed it to an indoor shelter and laid in wait. Others refused to budge, optimistic that a shield of mere canvas or nylon would be enough to weather the storm.

It was a little test of will, yet another thing that hikers can assess, if and whenever they choose.

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### More Info

Here are resources for Wisconsin hikers, both the casual and the hard-core varieties:

> The state Department of Natural Resources has 37 state trails (many multi-purpose) that total 1,607 miles. There are 2,730 miles of hiking trails on state-owned property, which includes parks and wildlife areas. To learn more, go to [www.dnr.wi.gov](http://www.dnr.wi.gov) and select "outdoor recreation."

> Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail is one of the nation's eight national scenic trails. About 600 of its intended 1,000 miles are ready to use. A project goal is to help hikers experience and understand the effect that glaciers have had on the state.

Call 800-227-5712 or go to [www.iceagetrail.org](http://www.iceagetrail.org) for more about this massive undertaking and trail location.

> The Wisconsin Go Hiking Club has been around for 80 years, with about 400 members ranging in age from 25 to more than 80. Most hiking is done in the Milwaukee area, but there also are hiking

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events and camping weekends farther away.

Hike length ranges from 4 miles to more than 20; hiking routes are described as "leisurely" to "bushwhacking." Club membership is \$15 per year, or \$20 per couple; call 414-299-9285 or go to [www.homestead.com/wisconsinhiking](http://www.homestead.com/wisconsinhiking) for details.

> Helpful guidebooks for hikers include *Great Wisconsin Walks* by William Chad McGrath (\$16.95, Trails Books), *Madison Walks* by Harriet Brown and Jamie Young (\$15.95, Jones Books) and *Wisconsin's Outdoor Treasures* by Tim Bewer (\$18.95, Trails Books).

<http://wisconsinhiking.com/magazine/articles/summer04/hikes.html>

### **When the Snow Melts the Fun is just Begging**

**By B.J.Baker**

#### **When the Snow Melts the Fun is just Begging by B.J.Baker**

When the snow melts in the Rockies, that doesn't mean the fun ends. With warm, idyllic weather and a lush landscape literally bursting with life, a whole new world awaits your discovering the summertime, giving you all the more reason to make the mountain West a favorite destination.

There's no limit to the activities you can enjoy during the summer in Mountain Resorts. Hike along mountain trails threading through rich green meadows studded with brilliant wild flowers. Feel the rush of whitewater rafting along the River. Discover rugged, untamed territory on a hike. Take in spectacular mountain views from a unique perspective—atop a horse perhaps, or from a hot-air balloon 1,500 feet in the air. If it's culture you want, a whole season of outdoor concerts, art exhibits, rodeos and festivals means there's something for everyone, no matter what your taste. What's more, with the all great discounts to be had for lodging, dining and entertainment, visiting Mountain Resorts in the summer means the whole family can enjoy, even more of this mountain retreat for less than you might think!

So when you start planning your next summer vacation, think about the Mountains in Summer. Covered in white or green, this mountain wonderland will have you returning again and again.

B.J. Baker is an avid outdoor enthusiast who currently resides in The Woodlands, Texas. As a child, BJ accompanied his family on family excursions to Japan, China, South East Asia, Europe and to the Rockies snow skiing. Still traveling the world and instilled with a love for travel and adventure, today BJ is the owner of several travel websites. [www.placestosleep.com](http://www.placestosleep.com), [www.vacationresorttravel.com](http://www.vacationresorttravel.com), [www.advenquest.com](http://www.advenquest.com), and [www.snow-skiing.com](http://www.snow-skiing.com).

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