

Minnesota Point Pine Forest

Scientific and Natural Area

Minnesota Point Pine Forest SNA is a uniquely significant remnant of the once vast Great Lakes Pine Forest. It is home to the only old-growth red and white pine forest found on Lake Superior sand dunes in Minnesota. What makes it even more interesting is these sand dunes have formed one of the longest freshwater sandbars in the world. This special place is also very important habitat for a number of rare species and is used frequently as a rest area for migrating warblers and shorebirds.

THE NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES

The primary native plant community on the SNA is an old-growth red pine and white pine forest. Overall, red pines dominate in the drier dune habitat, whereas white pines dominate where there is more moisture. Although the oldest tree here was core-dated from 1798, this forest stand has a healthy mix of trees of all ages. This is good news as a mixed age pine forest is generally resilient to change and capable of regenerating with minimal management. Other native plant communities on the site include sand beach, beachgrass dune, and juniper dune shrubland.



© Coldsnap Photography

RARE SPECIES

A native population of American beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligulata*) is found on Minnesota (Park) Point. Not only is this the western edge of the species natural range, but it is also the only population in Minnesota. It is a Minnesota threatened species. Other rare plants are found on the SNA including beach-heather (*Hudsonia tomentosa*), bur-marigold (*Bidens discoidea*), slender hairgrass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*), and several species of a family of small ferns known as moonworts (*Botrychium sp.*). Rare animals, such as the hairy-necked tiger beetle (*Cicindela hirticollis rhodensis*) and lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*), have been observed in the vicinity of the SNA.

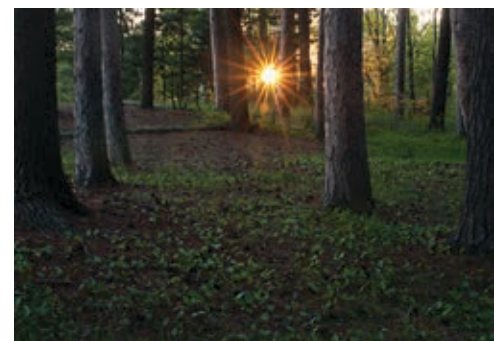
SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREAS

Minnesota's living museum of Scientific and Natural Areas have a thousand stories to tell—of Minnesota's lands and waters, its plants and animals, its past and future. This system of public nature preserves offers the highest degree of legal protection for native land in the state.

The Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) Program preserves natural features and rare resources of exceptional scientific and educational value that encompass:

- Undisturbed plant communities
- Rare or endangered species habitat
- Seasonal habitat for bird or animal concentrations
- Plant communities undergoing succession as a result of natural processes
- Natural geologic formations and features

The SNA Program's goal is to ensure that no single rare feature is lost from any region of the state. This requires protection and management of each feature in sufficient quantity and distribution across the landscape.



© Bruce Ludewig



Please Note: These sites are open for nature observation and education, however, there are no restrooms or other facilities. Please understand the area you are visiting is not meant for intensive recreational activities. These sites protect natural features, rare species, and critical habitats.



-  Sand Beach
-  Beachgrass Dune
-  Juniper Dune Shrubland
-  Red Pine-White Pine Woodland
-  Trails
-  Parking
-  Interpretive Sign

0 0.025 0.05 0.075 0.1 Miles

north ↑