



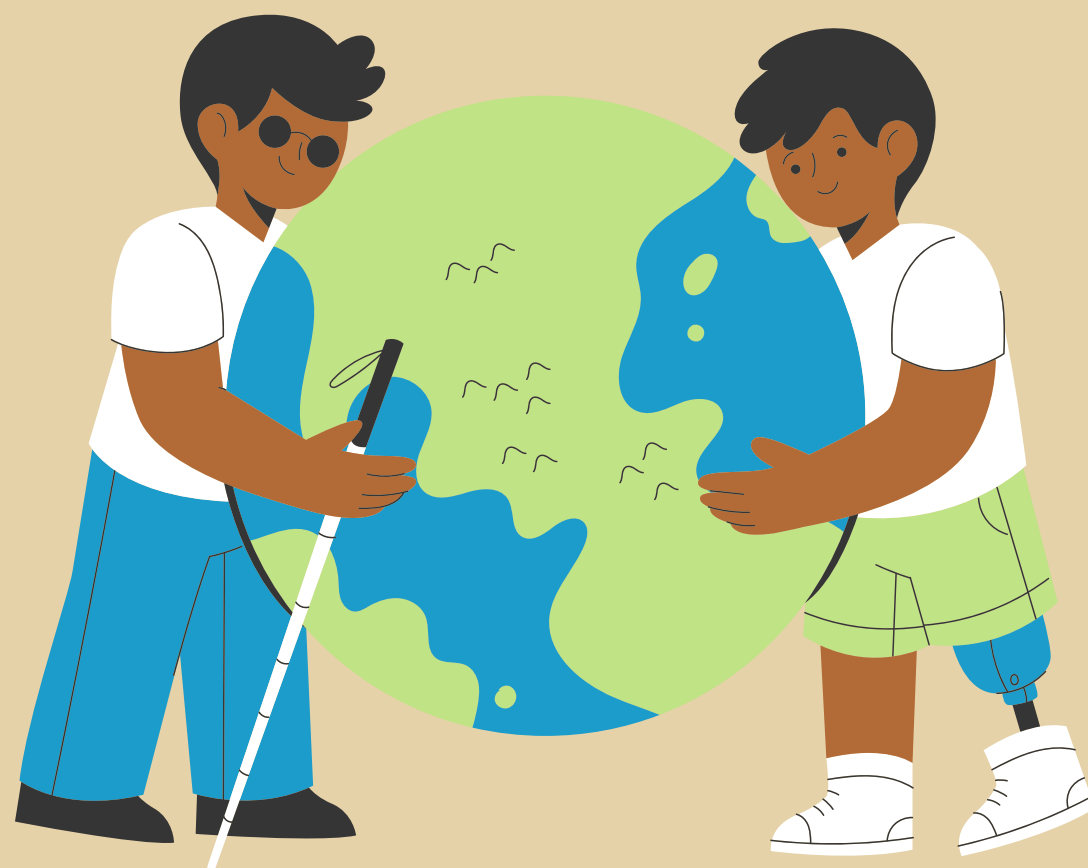
Save the Dunes

Animals & Ecosystems

**This document was made possible by a grant from
the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration and the Indiana Department of
Natural Resources Lake Michigan Coastal Program**

**At Save the Dunes, we are environmental advocates:
which means we help speak up for and defend nature, as it
doesn't have a voice to use on it's own!**

**We stick up for nature like you might stick up for
your friend when someone is being mean to them.
We protect the things we love using our voice!**



Northwest Indiana: a home to plants, animals & people co-exisiting with industry.



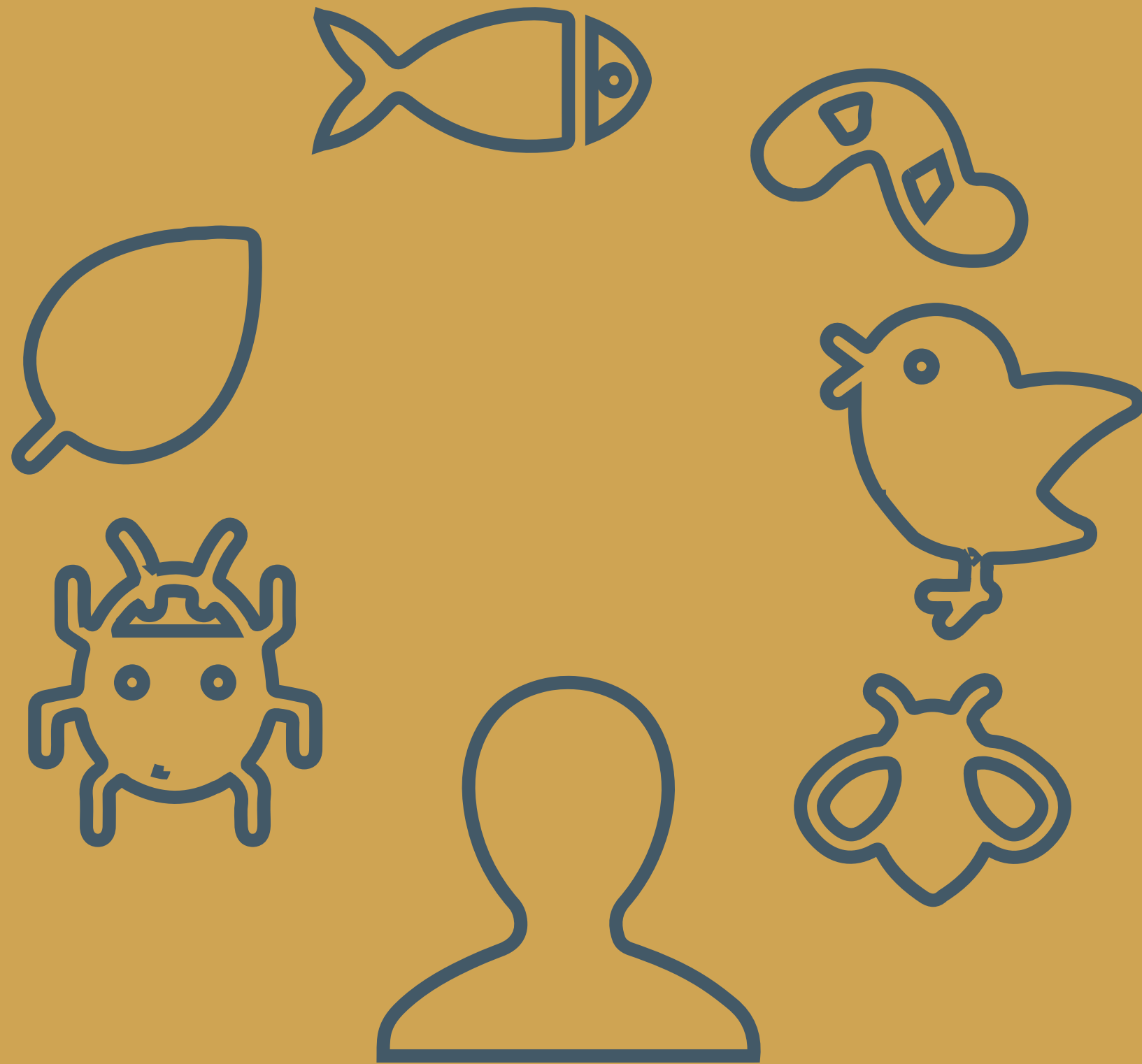
There are 10 different habitats that comprise the Indiana Dunes!

This makes for an exciting and unique area to call home.

What are some different natural area's you've seen around where you live?

Some of ecosystems began to form over 114,000 years ago!





What's an ecosystem?

An ecosystem is made up of all of the living and nonliving things in an area. This includes all of the plants, animals, and other living things that make up the communities of life in an area. Plus the rocks, soil, sand and water that co-exist with us too.

Sand Dune



- Hills, mounds, or ridges of wind-deposited sand
- Most prominent feature of the area- The beach!
- Our national park namesake- Indiana Dunes National Park



Spotted Sand Piper



Marram Grass

Forest



- **Characterized by a dense community of trees**
- **In the dunes, there are upland forest, floodplain forest, and flatwoods forests**
- **Forests are the largest terrestrial ecosystems of Earth by area**



Virginia Possum

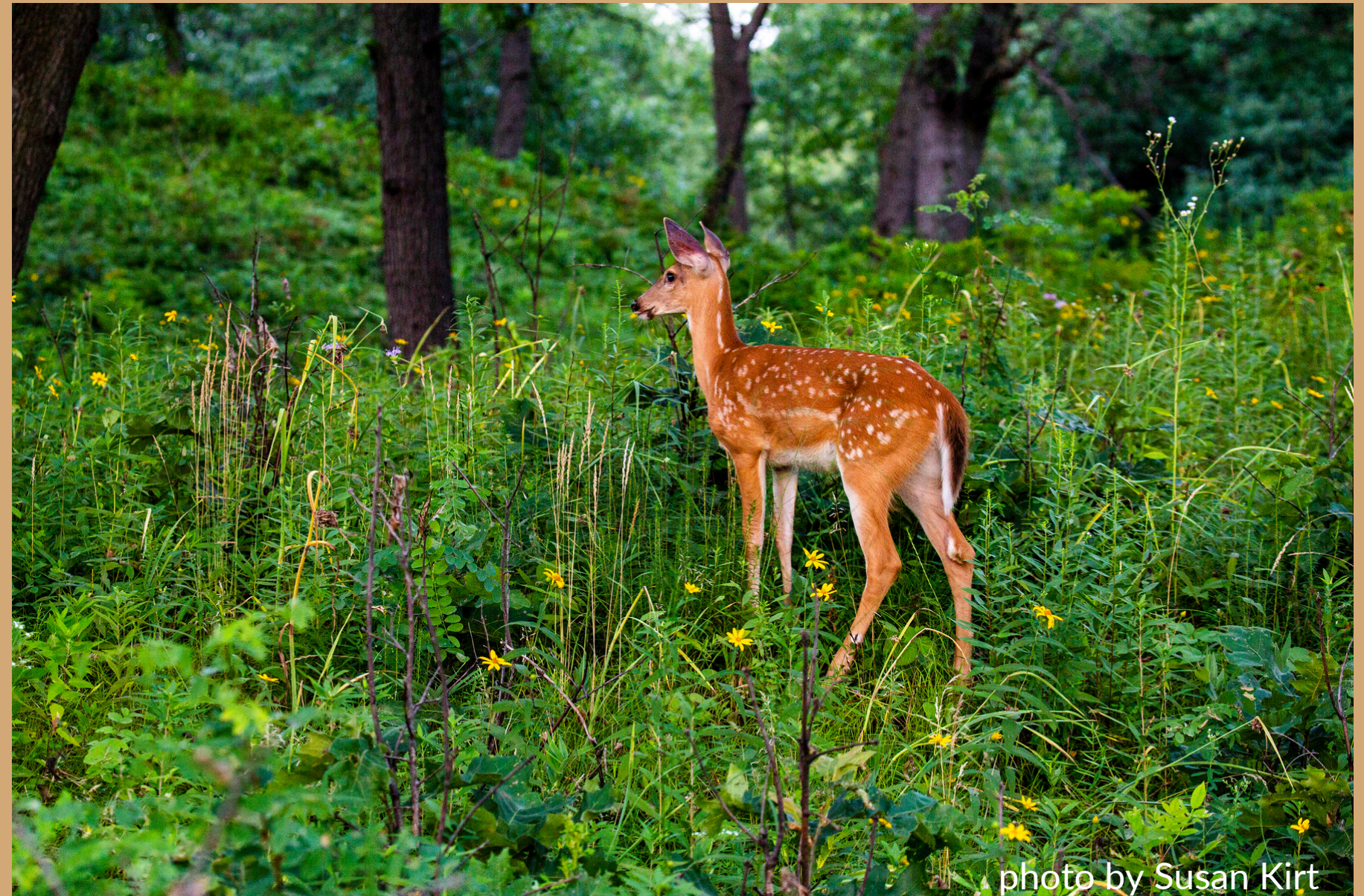


photo by Susan Kirt

White Tailed Deer Fawn

Savanna

- Naturally occurring open area with grasses and herbaceous shrubs, with black oak and white oak trees
- The open canopy allows sufficient light to reach the ground
- Benefit from controlled burning





Red Headed Woodpecker



Karner Blue Butterfly

Bog

- A bog is usually the result of a glacial depression, which creates an enclosed drainage system.
- There will usually be a floating mat of peat moss
- Home to Carnivorous Plants - they're hungry!





Boreal Chorus Frog



Pitcher Plant

Lake Michigan

- Lake Michigan is the second largest of the five Great Lakes.
- Freshwater ecosystem provides water for consumption, transportation, power, and recreation as well as critical fish and wildlife habitat.
- The shoreline currents move and, debris, and other pollutants from the north on both shores to the toe of the lake off the Indiana Coast





Largemouth Bass



Common Tern

River

- A stream with a watershed of 200 square miles or more
- Here in the Dunes it's mostly The Calumet River which acts as a drainage system into Lake Michigan
- Served as the original travel ways before roads





Blunt Nose Minnow



Red Shouldered Hawk

Prarie

- Dominated by grass, with few trees
- Sometimes called “grasslands”
- Each is dependent on moisture levels and soil types, ranging from wet to dry





Eastern Bluebird



Brown Butterfly

Dune and Swale

- A series of low, linear sand ridges interspersed with wetlands
- The dune and swale topography is easiest to see in the Miller Woods
- Much of the dune and swales was eliminated by the construction of the industrial plants of Lake County

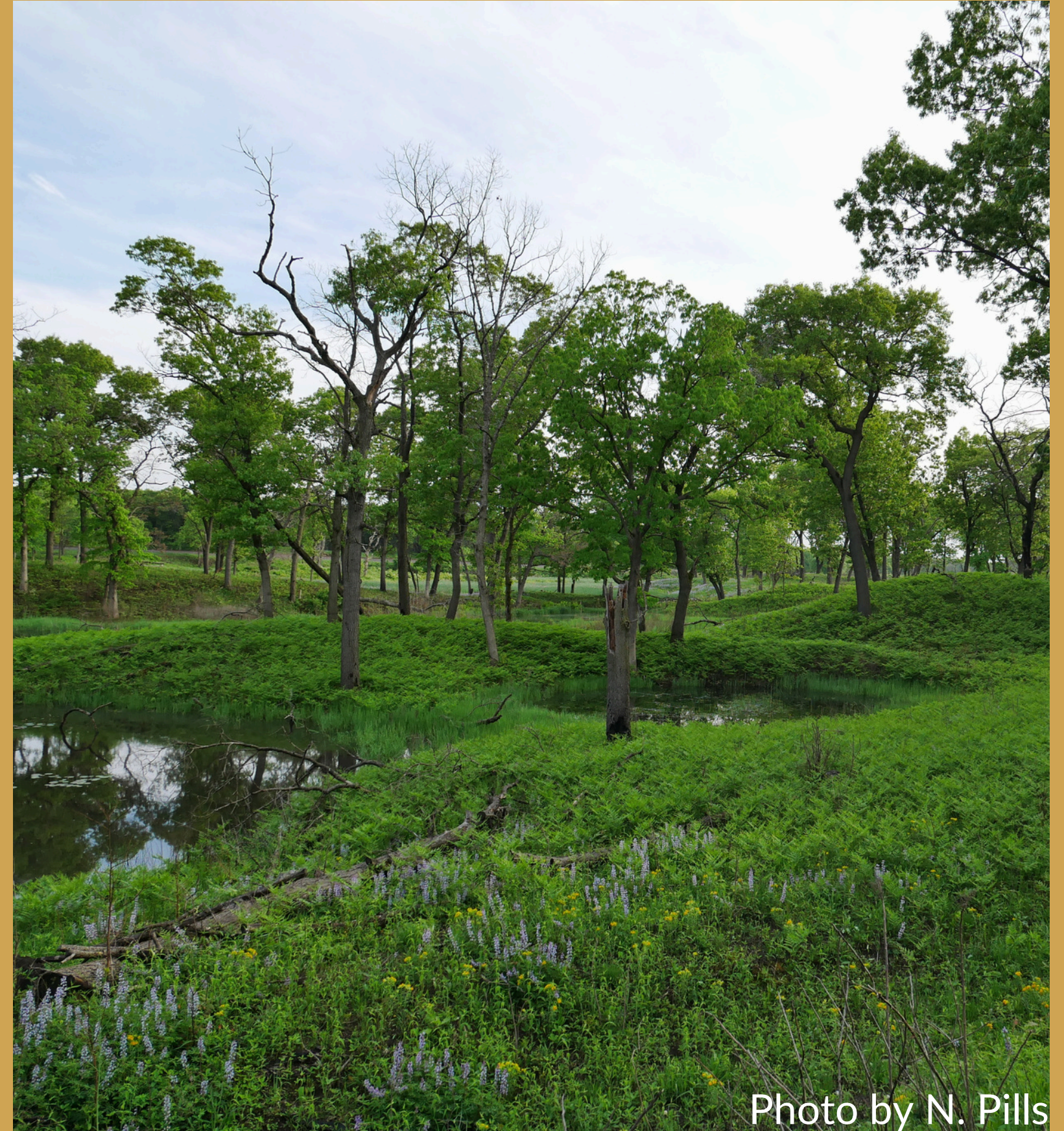


Photo by N. Pills



Common Yellowthroat



Blanding's Turtle

Marsh

- **Wetland that is predominantly sedges and grasses**
- **Characterized by having water at the surface or above the surface during most of the year**
- **Improve water quality by acting as a filter for pollutants and sediment from the water that flows through them**





American Beaver



Sandhill Crane

Swamp



- **Wetlands dominated by woody plants & trees**
- **Natural form of flood management and defense against flooding**
- **Play an important role in bird migrations**



Barred Owl



Male Woodduck