


BETE GRISE WETLANDS PRESERVE

Serene and Scenic

 **LOCATION:**
Western Upper Peninsula

 **SIZE:** 63 acres

 **TRAIL LENGTH:**
2.4 miles of trails

 **DIFFICULTY:** Easy



BECOME A COMMUNITY SCIENTIST:

Help us keep track of the species at our preserves by using iNaturalist to record your observations. Learn more at [nature.org/miexplore](https://www.nature.org/miexplore).



A mile and a half of beautiful white sand, and the clear waters of Lake Superior. It's easy to see why the Bete Grise Wetlands Preserve lures travelers to its shores.

But this beach has more than scenic value. It also protects the wetlands behind it, which extend west to Lac La Belle. These are some of the highest-quality Great Lakes marshes on Lake Superior, supporting a diverse variety of grasses, sedges and other plants. This unique marsh also provides migrating waterfowl and spawning fish with essential habitat.

In the late 1990s, it looked as though this natural splendor could be diminished forever. The area along the beach was targeted for a residential subdivision, including a road through the surrounding wetlands. A heroic community effort, supported by many partners—including The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Houghton/Keweenaw Conservation District (HKCD), the Keweenaw Land Trust, the Michigan Coastal Zone Management program and more—finally achieved the protection of just over 1,100 acres in 2004.

TNC transferred these lands to HKCD, with the exception of the 63 acres that comprise our Bete Grise Wetlands Preserve. Over the next dozen years, TNC and other partners helped HKCD expand the original protected area—parcel by parcel—to nearly 5,000 acres at the neighboring Bete Grise Preserve.



Kayaks and canoes (carried in from the parking lot) are a great way to enjoy the calm waters of Bete Grise Bay. © TNC

YOU SHOULD VISIT IF...

You love picture-perfect picnic spots!

TNC's little slice of paradise at the Bete Grise Wetlands Preserve is a great place to bring the whole family for a pleasant afternoon. While you're there, look to the skies—and treetops—to catch sight of raptors like the merlin and bald eagle.

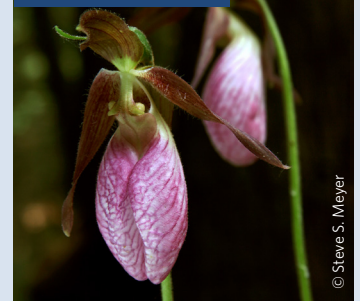
Some of the plant and animal species you might spot on your visit include:

- Sandhill crane
- Cliff swallow
- Red-breasted merganser
- Pitcher plant
- Pink lady-slipper
- Blue flag iris
- Black spruce

SANDHILL CRANE



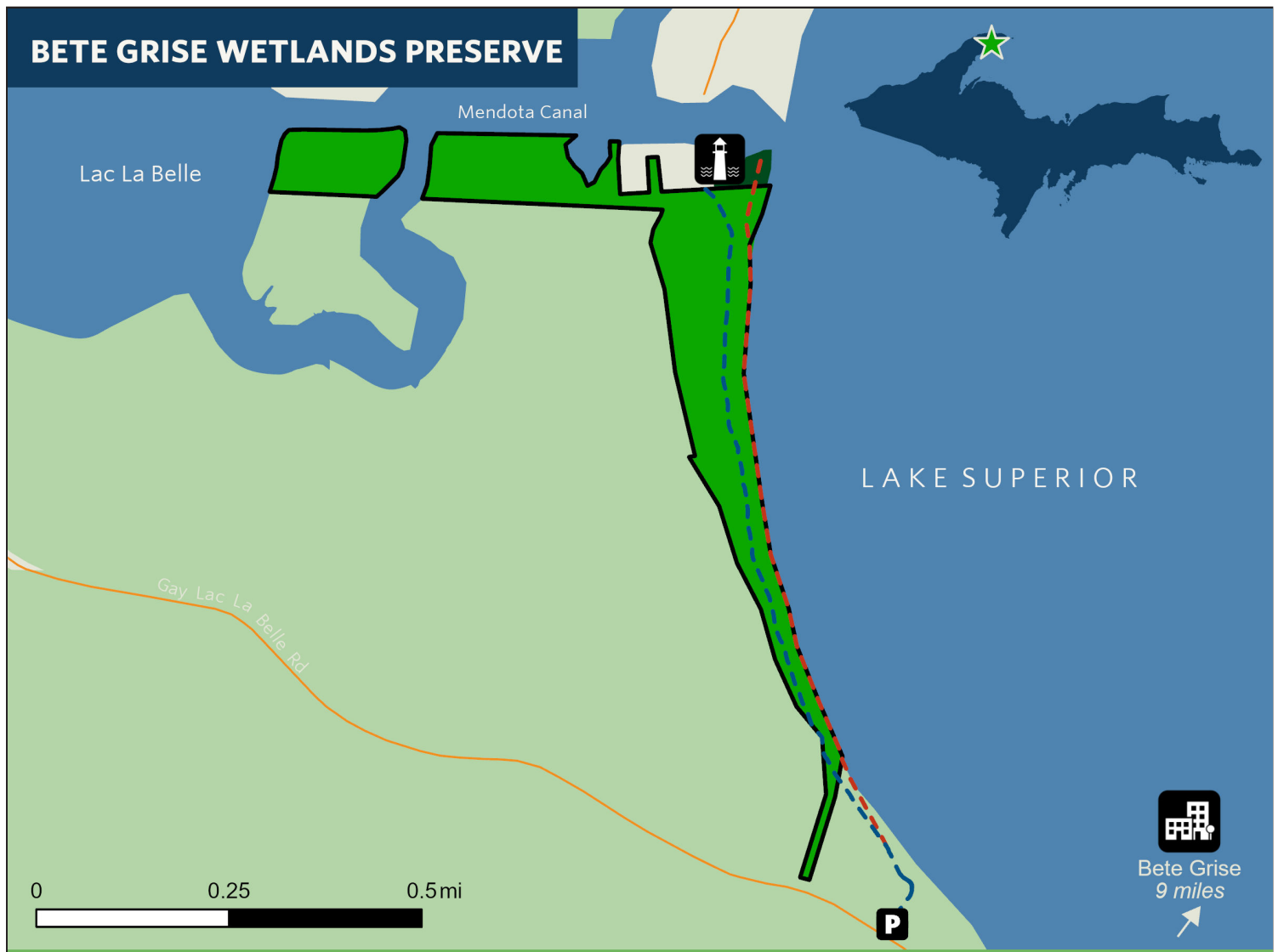
PINK LADY-SLIPPER



PITCHER PLANT



BETE GRISE WETLANDS PRESERVE



LEGEND



Bete Grise Wetlands Preserve



Mendota Lighthouse



Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District



Red Trail (1 mi- Sandy)



Blue Trail (1.2 mi- Forested)



Parking Area



HOW TO GET THERE

Directions from Houghton, MI: Take US-41 north for 35 miles to Lac La Belle Road, which will be on the south (right) side of US-41. Turn right onto Lac La Belle Road and continue about 10 miles (the road becomes Gay Lac La Belle Road) to HKCD's Bete Grise Preserve, where you can park. The parking lot will be on your left, marked by a large Bete Grise Preserve sign.

Access TNC's Bete Grise Wetlands Preserve by walking north along the beach.

MAKE TODAY A NATURE DAY!

Nearby points of interest include:

- Helmut and Candis Stern Preserve at Mt. Baldy, 15 mi: nature.org/miexplore
- Estivant Pines Nature Sanctuary, 21 mi: michigannature.org
- Mary Macdonald Preserve at Horseshoe Harbor, 25 mi: nature.org/miexplore
- Lodging, food and more: keweenaw.info

TIPS FOR A GREAT VISIT

- Spring, late summer and early fall are the best times to visit this preserve.
- You can walk along the beach or follow the trail that runs parallel a short distance inland. Note that parts of the trail can be seasonally wet.
- Kayaks and canoes can be carried in from the parking lot.
- Insect repellent is recommended in the late spring and early summer.
- Please leave pets at home.
- No hunting, camping or fires permitted.
- Please follow the rules posted at the preserve and online at nature.org/miexplore.

Thanks for your help protecting the land, water and wildlife of this special place!