

HELMUT & CANDIS STERN PRESERVE AT MT. BALDY

A View Worth the Climb

**LOCATION:**

Western Upper Peninsula



SIZE: 1,731 acres

**TRAIL LENGTH:**

3 miles to summit



DIFFICULTY: Moderate

**AUDIO TOUR AVAILABLE:**

Get the insider's view of this preserve with a free self-guided tour on the TravelStorys app! To learn more, visit nature.org/miexplore.



Northern balds, like the summit of Mt. Baldy, occur in Michigan only near Lake Superior, from Isle Royale to Gogebic County. © Danielle Miller/TNC

It's a landscape like nowhere else in Michigan.

Venture to the Helmut and Candis Stern Preserve at Mt. Baldy, on the Keweenaw Peninsula, to discover a craggy, 1.5-mile-long ridge of volcanic bedrock towering 730 feet above Lake Superior, and a trail that takes you to the very top.

At first, the trail leads you through a forest of pines and hardwoods such as sugar maple and yellow birch. As you climb to more exposed heights, this lush forest gradually gives way to wind-contorted white cedar and ground juniper. Here, you can find “disjunct” plant species—such as pine-drops, heartleaf arnica and northern woodsia—that are more commonly found in mountain ranges to the west and far north. But they are right at home on the slopes of Mt. Baldy!

It can take up to two hours to reach the summit, but the spectacular panoramic views of Lake Superior and the Keweenaw Peninsula are worth it. Here, high winds and snow have scoured the rock bare in places, creating one of the best examples of a “northern bald” on the Keweenaw Peninsula. Look for Brockway Mountain to the east, and the idyllic waters of Lake Bailey below you to the north.



PINE-DROPS

© TNC Archives

Acquired by TNC in 2001, this preserve was established thanks to the generous support of **Helmut and Candis Stern**.

In 2006, TNC also dedicated the main ridge trail as a memorial to **Nicole Bloom**, a Michigan Tech University student who was active in many environmental issues.

YOU SHOULD VISIT IF...

You love Michigan's raptors! The Helmut and Candis Stern Preserve is known for the amazing array of bird species, including many raptors, that pass through on their migration during the spring and fall. With a watchful eye and binoculars, you may spot a few circling the heights of Mt. Baldy. Sharp-shinned hawks, broad-winged hawks and bald eagles are among the most common species seen in the area.

Other wildlife to look for include:

- American marten
- Black bear
- Bobcat
- Northern red-bellied snake
- Downy woodpecker
- Rose-breasted grosbeak
- Cedar waxwing

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK

© Andrew Conn/zaaro/Flickr

AMERICAN MARTEN

© Megan Lowenz/TNC Photo Contest 2019

CEDAR WAXWING

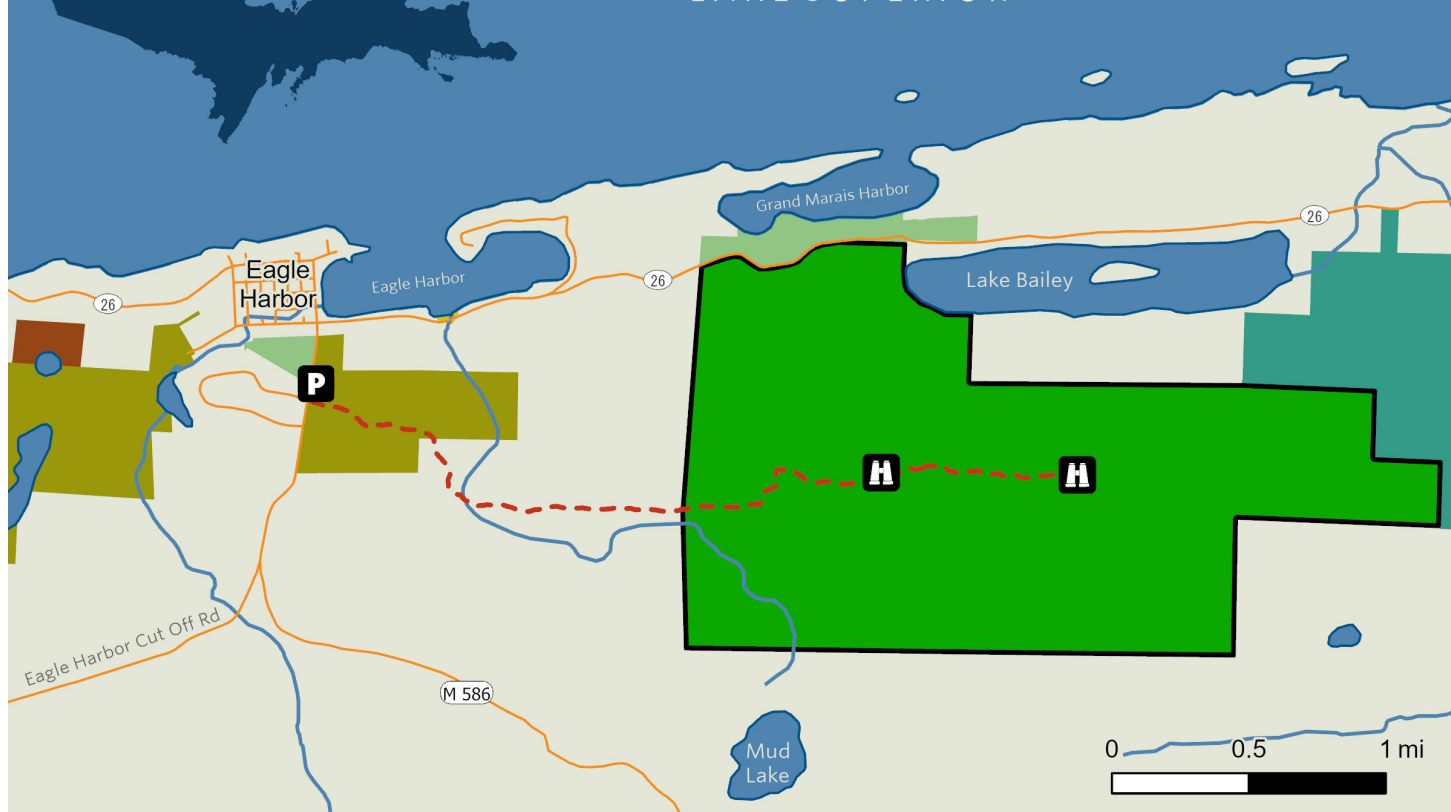
© James Colymore/TNC Photo Contest 2021

HELMUT & CANDIS STERN PRESERVE AT MT. BALDY



Copper Harbor
14 miles
→

LAKE SUPERIOR



LEGEND



Helmut & Candis Stern Preserve



Protected Land: Privately Owned



Local Government Land



Redwyn's Dunes Nature Sanctuary



Lake Bailey Wildlife Sanctuary



Preserve Trail (3.2 mi)



Overlook (Caution)



Parking Area



HOW TO GET THERE

Directions from Calumet, MI: Follow US-41 north approximately 16.5 miles and turn left (north) onto the Eagle Harbor Cut Off Road. Go 5.2 miles and look for the preserve sign on your right (east). Turn in here to park in the gravel parking lot. (Note: The lot is not plowed during winter.)

On foot, follow the trail marker signs (about 1.6 miles) from the parking lot to the TNC preserve boundary. From here, it's another 1.4 miles to the top of Mt. Baldy.

MAKE TODAY A NATURE DAY!

Nearby points of interest include:

- George Hite Dunes and Marshes Preserve, 3.8 mi: keweenawlandtrust.org
- Bete Grise Wetlands Preserve, 15 mi: nature.org/miexplore
- Estivant Pines Nature Sanctuary, 17 mi: michigannature.org
- Mary Macdonald Preserve at Horseshoe Harbor, 19 mi: nature.org/miexplore
- Lodging, food and more: keweenaw.info

TIPS FOR A GREAT VISIT

- The Helmut and Candis Stern Preserve is open year-round for recreation such as hiking, birding, photography, snowshoeing or trail running.
- For adventurous runners, the Keweenaw Trails Alliance hosts a 6-km Mt. Baldy summit run as part of their annual "Run the Keweenaw" races in mid-summer.
- Late summer and early fall are the best times to visit to Mt. Baldy to avoid the biting insects that come out during early summer.
- Hiking boots and insect repellent are recommended.
- Please note the trail includes a creek crossing. Water levels are typically low but do exercise caution.
- If you visit during the deer hunting season (**early September to early January**), **wear bright colors and exercise caution**. All hunters must have a TNC permit and state license.
- Please leave pets at home.
- No camping or fires permitted.
- Please follow the rules posted at the preserve and online at nature.org/miexplore.

Thank you for protecting the land, water and wildlife of this place!