

MACALESTER COLLEGE

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55101

■ DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

Ordway Bulletin No. 3

Subject: NATURE TRAILS at ORDWAY.

There are two foot-trails at Ordway which are marked and along which are conducted nature tours for elementary school children. This program at the Area has proven to be popular with young people at the 4th-7th grade levels; also many adults prefer it to 'breaking trail' through underbrush, a practice which is not encouraged because of the deleterious effect upon the environment.

The laying-out of foot-trails is important in such a place as Ordway, where a cardinal policy is to leave the land relatively undisturbed so that studies may be made on a fairly realistic basis. One of the biggest factors in the upheaval of the environment is the presence of large numbers of people and/or of undisciplined observers. Providing suitable trails for the passage of groups of people is a good way of helping to maintain the property in rather untouched condition. While this is the biggest consideration there are other reasons for the trails: Irritating plants, such as briars and poison ivy, both of which abound at Ordway; help for those who might otherwise become confused in the woods (although it is hard to conceive of someone's becoming 'really lost' in the Area).

TRAIL YELLOW is about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles in length, being a looping path which passes through grassland, oak forest, wetland, river flood plain and birch forest. There are good examples along the trail of the various types of habitat.

TRAIL RED is much shorter, being about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in traverse; This is principally an oak forest path but it leads along a permanent pond and has much of the interest which abounds in that small body of water. There is also a magnificent stand of ferns and two stands of aspens, which are of recent growth.



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