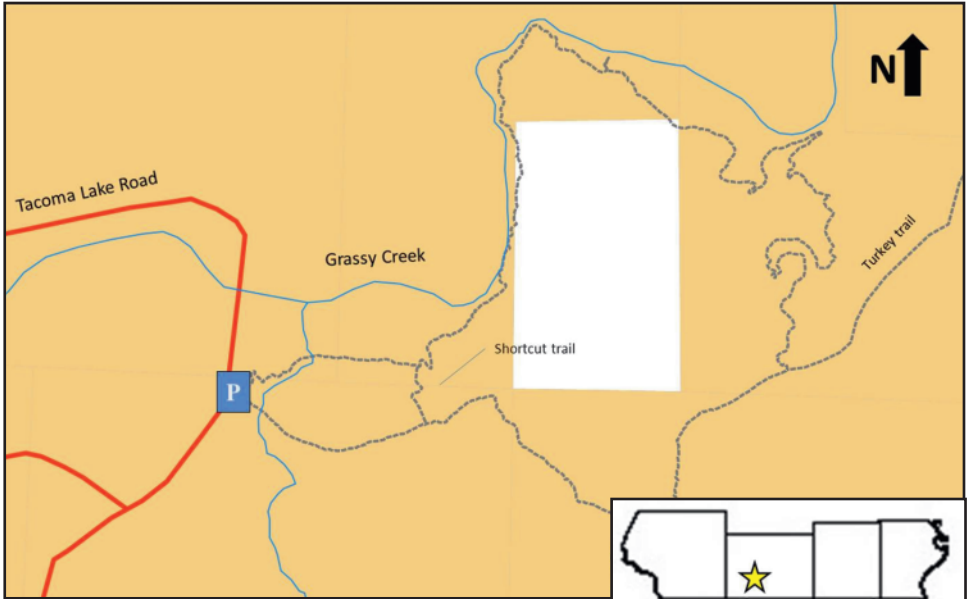


# Rocky Bluff Trail

Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge

0.5 mile - Easy Rating

Trailhead: 37.6419, -89.0977



Rocky Bluff Trail is one of the most well-known wildflower hikes in southern Illinois. While the entire trail is a 1.8-mile loop that does feature some steep ascents and descents, a recommended 'shortcut' trail is well marked and shortens the trip to an easy .5-mile loop that accesses the best wildflower viewing areas. From the trailhead, you can go either way along the loop. Left from the parking lot brings you immediately down the bluff next to an intermittent waterfall that is impressive when it is running. The other direction goes through an upland pine stand and upland hardwoods before reaching the 'shortcut' trail and descending steeply down the bluff into the heart of the wildflower area. Once at the bottom of the 'shortcut' trail, turning left will complete the loop, but you can follow the trail to the right for several hundred yards to view more wildflower habitat. Famous for its display of celandine poppies, this short, easy trail also provides great opportunities to view a wide array of spring wildflowers. Other specialties include spring beauties, dutchman's breeches, purple trilliums, false rue anemone and bloodroot.

This trail is located near the dam of Devil's Kitchen Lake, on Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge. The trail is accessed via a small gravel lot off of Tacoma Lake Road, .5-mile south of Grassy Road. Parking, particularly on weekends in spring, can sometimes be tricky as this is a very popular hiking location. Keep in mind that this trail is on a National Wildlife Refuge and any visitor will need to have a pass to use the area. Annual and day passes are inexpensive and available at the Refuge Visitor Center on Route 148. The Refuge also typically hosts spring wildflower hikes on Saturdays in April. Contact the Refuge Visitor Center at 618-997-3344 for more information on these.

## Notable wildflowers present at site

Celandine poppy  
*Stylophorum diphyllum*

Bloodroot  
*Sanguinaria canadensis*

Yellow trout lily  
*Erythronium americanum*

Harbinger-of-spring  
*Erigenia bulbosa*

Toothwort  
*Dentaria laciniata*



Waterfall along the trail. Blue-eyed Mary (inset)