

Station #14

Can you find the large stump behind the post? It serves as a lasting reminder of a large white pine tree that loggers cut over 100 years ago. Check the stump for evidence of rot and decay. Natural organisms called “decomposers” break down dead matter in the forest allowing recycling of nutrients back into the soil. This cycle continues as other living organisms absorb the recycled nutrients.

Station #15

With the loss or decline of several tree species such as American chestnut, oak, beech, and white ash, another tree has taken their place as the most common species in Pennsylvania--red maple. With its unique ability to grow on almost any site, red maple has outgrown many other trees. Look for the red maple tree with yellow paint on it.

Station #16

A black cherry tree (marked with a red band) lies to the left of this post. Its bark looks like burnt potato chips. In late summer/early fall this tree produces small, black, round cherry-like seeds that game birds, song birds, and many mammals eat. Black cherry lumber demands a premium price throughout the world, making it one of the most valuable hardwoods in Pennsylvania.

Station #17

Look for the small serviceberry tree marked in white. Serviceberry flowers early in the spring with beautiful and showy white flowers. You may also know this tree as Juneberry, because its red fruits ripen in June. Its fruit makes excellent jelly, pies or juice. Birds, bears and other wildlife also love to eat the sweet berries.

Station #18

Trees are often afflicted by insects and/or diseases. Some cause death, like emerald ash borer and chestnut blight, while others cause growth defects. The black cherry tree behind this post has a fungal disease commonly called black knot. Black knot causes rough, warty growth on twigs, branches and stems. This can often lead to the affected parts dying (dieback) and even the death of the tree. Once established, black knot can spread quickly through a forest that contains a lot black cherry trees.

Station #19

Take note of the shrubby vegetation (thorn apples, hawthorns, etc.) and observe the wide spacing between trees at this stop; this indicates that a farm and old fields once occupied this site. Fields transform into forests through a process called “succession”. Succession starts when land is no longer farmed. Eventually weeds and small shrubs begin to take over. Next larger shrubs and small trees begin to appear. At first, trees that prefer sunlight will grow and then gradually, trees that like shade, such as the mature trees in front of you. will begin to replace those that prefer sun. Given enough time and lack of disturbance, the process will continue until the forest eventually contains “old growth”, shade-loving trees.

Station #20

This old apple tree, with a large hole, is in decline, but it still produces fruit for wildlife. Yet another clue that an old farm used to occupy this area. Both wild and domestic fruit trees play an important role in supplying food for wildlife.



An elevated walkway over a small stream

Ray Lashure



Thank you for walking the Lashure Interpretive Trail. We hope that you have enjoyed your visit to the Cornplanter State Forest. If you have any comments or would like to sign our visitor registration list, please stop by our information area adjacent to the parking area. We hope that you will come back and explore the rest of our Hunter Run trail system.

Lashure Interpretive Trail Cornplanter State Forest



The Lashure Interpretive Trail is named in honor of Ray Lashure, a former Fire Warden who worked in this area during the 1960's. Ray helped detect and suppress many fires throughout his career. The Lashure Trail is a loop trail approximately ½ mile long. 20 stations along the trail are marked with numbered posts. Each station details a specific forest feature. Using this brochure, you can follow along on the trail stopping at each station. We hope you enjoy the walk and learn a little more about the forest.



For more information

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<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/stateforests/cornplanter/index.htm>

In the event of an emergency, dial 911



Station #1

The Bureau of Forestry (BOF) built this pond to fill trucks to fight wildfires. Today, it primarily serves as an essential source of water for wildlife. Look closely and you may see fish, frogs, salamanders, snakes or aquatic insects.



Station #2

The red pine trees that surround you were planted in 1968. From 1950-1970's, the BOF established plantations like this to help reforest the land. Like other conifers, red pine keeps its green needles year-round. Red pine helps shelter wildlife from harsh winter weather. You can also cut red pine and mill it into lumber.

Station #3

As you stop at post #3, what is different from post #2? Notice that you are in a completely different forest type. You are now standing in a hardwood forest where the leaves are broad and flat. If you are walking the trail in the fall you may notice the fall coloration of this deciduous forest. Pennsylvania is dominated by hardwood forests. Hardwood trees produce firewood and high quality lumber for flooring, molding, furniture and cabinets.

Station #4

Look for wetlands as you cross over the two footbridges. Wetlands are considered to be the most productive and biologically diverse habitats in Pennsylvania. They are defined by the following three criteria: 1) standing water 2) aquatic plant species, and 3) hydric or wet soils. Wetlands provide habitat for many unique plant and animal species and are excellent nesting, wintering and feeding sites. Due to the many acres of wetlands lost to development each year, we must protect wetlands.

Station #5

This stop features four different species, or kinds, of oak trees. Many species of wildlife rely on the acorns oak trees produce for food. Due to its beauty and strength, oak is also one of Pennsylvania's most important timber species. Flooring producers, cabinet makers, and furniture manufacturers worldwide seek oak lumber for their products. See if you can spot the four species of oak.

Red Oak (red band)

Black Oak (blue band)

White Oak (white band)

Scarlet Oak (orange band)

Station #6

The tree near this post is sassafras and is the only tree with three distinct leaf shapes on the same tree. Don't pull leaves off the tree but see if you can find an example of each leaf shape: no lobes (entire), one lobe (mitten), two lobes (glove). The roots, leaves twigs and fruit have a sweet scent.



Station #7

The eastern white pine directly behind this post holds its needles all year like most conifers. It can grow to become one of the largest trees in Pennsylvania. Its seeds and needles serve as a source of food for squirrels, chipmunks, mice and various species of birds. Eastern white pine also provides much needed shelter for wildlife from the cold winter conditions.

Station #8

As you stand at this post, notice the white oak seedling directly behind it (marked with white paint). One day, it will hopefully grow into a large, mature tree like the white oak directly behind it. But first, it has many obstacles to overcome, such as deer, drought, insects, disease, and competition from other trees.

Station #9

Notice the dead tree leaning on another tree behind this post. Foresters refer to dead or partially dead trees that remain standing as snags. Many species of wildlife depend on snags. The holes or hollow areas (cavities) found in snags provide shelter or a place to nest for owls, wood ducks, bluebirds, squirrels, and many other wildlife species. As snags decay, they contain insects, which make them a good source for woodpeckers and other insect-eating birds.

Station #10

Look carefully at the cut stump next to the post. Can you count the "annual growth rings" and determine the age of the tree? The width of the growth rings differs from year to year because of variations in growing conditions. Narrowly spaced rings indicate a stressed or suppressed tree growing under less than ideal conditions. Widely spaced rings indicate the tree was growing under favorable conditions.

Station #11

The small deer enclosure behind the post demonstrates the negative effects that whitetail deer can have on their habitat. The fence keeps deer from eating the plants that grow inside the enclosure. Pay close attention, and you will see a greater variety of plants growing inside the fence and those plants inside the fence are generally taller than those growing outside. This occurs because deer prefer certain plants over others. Therefore, they influence the entire ecosystem by eating the plants that they prefer.

Station #12

At one time, you could find American chestnut trees all throughout Pennsylvania's forests. People coveted its strong, straight grained lumber, and wildlife preferred its nuts. In the early 1900's a disease, commonly called the chestnut blight, decimated this once magnificent tree. Today, you may still find sprouts, seedlings, saplings and an occasional tree (like the one marked with white), but eventually they will all succumb to the blight. With the introduction of this single disease, we lost both the commercial and wildlife values of an entire species.

Station #13

Take note of the small tree, called a witch hazel, marked in white directly behind this post. This tree always blooms last in the forest. Its yellow flowers have been seen as late as December. Historically, people would distill a medicinal extract from its bark. Depending on the time of year, you may also notice a dense fern layer that blankets the ground. Some invasive ferns will shade out seedlings and use up valuable nutrients and water in the soil.