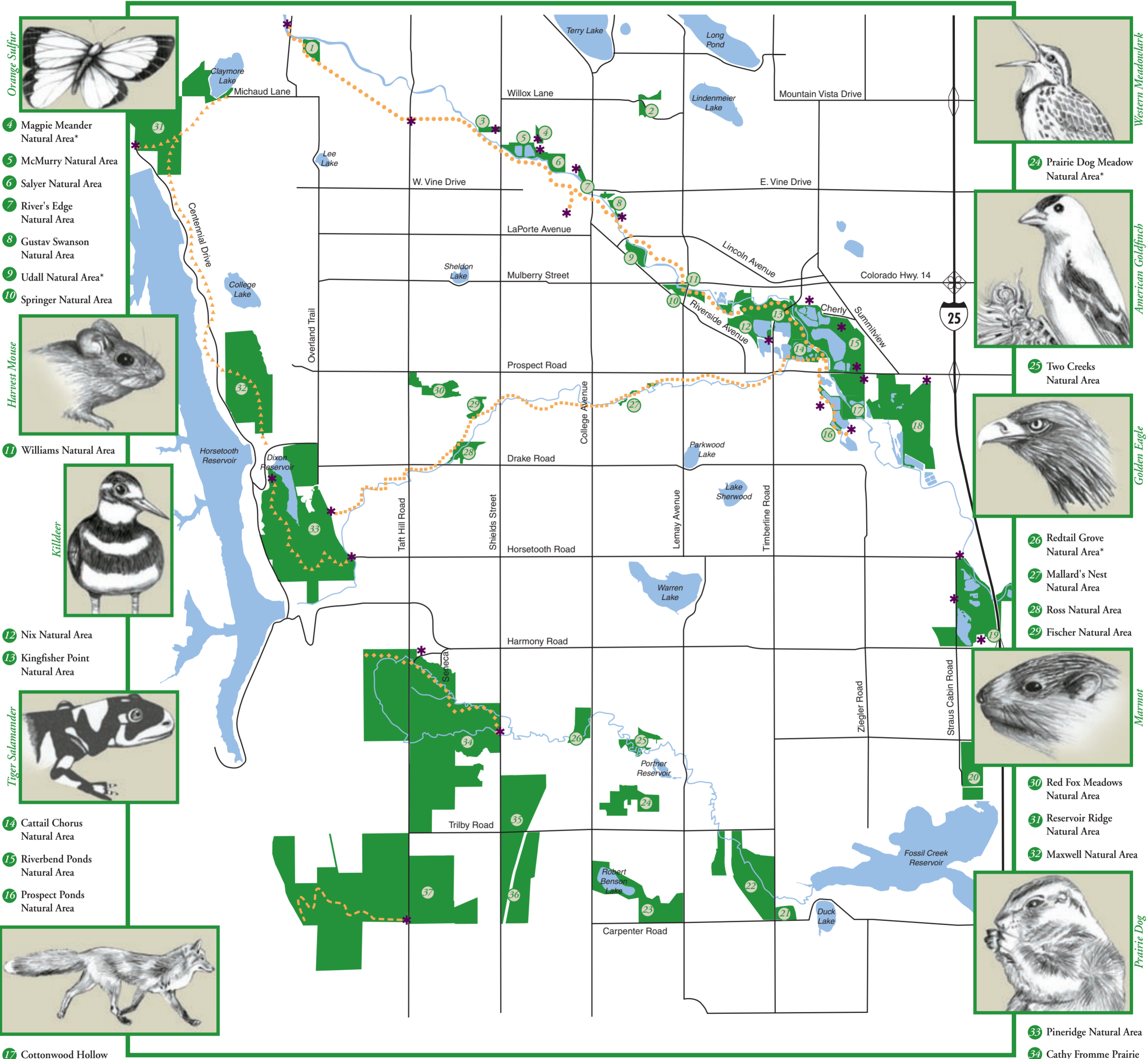


City of Fort Collins Local Natural Areas

- 1 Butterfly Woods Natural Area
- 2 Redwing Marsh Natural Area
- 3 North Shields Pond Natural Area

- 21 Fossil Creek Reservoir Natural Area*
- 22 Fossil Creek Wetlands Natural Area*
- 23 Pelican Marsh Natural Area*



- 4 Magpie Meander Natural Area*
- 5 McMurry Natural Area
- 6 Salyer Natural Area
- 7 River's Edge Natural Area
- 8 Gustav Swanson Natural Area
- 9 Udall Natural Area*
- 10 Springer Natural Area

- 11 Williams Natural Area

- 12 Nix Natural Area
- 13 Kingfisher Point Natural Area

- 14 Cattail Chorus Natural Area
- 15 Riverbend Ponds Natural Area
- 16 Prospect Ponds Natural Area

- 17 Cottonwood Hollow Natural Area
- 18 Running Deer Natural Area
- 19 Arapaho Bend Natural Area
- 20 Eagle View Natural Area*

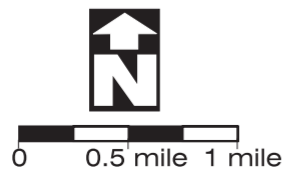
- 24 Prairie Dog Meadow Natural Area*

- 25 Two Creeks Natural Area

- 26 Redtail Grove Natural Area*
- 27 Mallard's Nest Natural Area
- 28 Ross Natural Area
- 29 Fischer Natural Area

- 30 Red Fox Meadows Natural Area
- 31 Reservoir Ridge Natural Area
- 32 Maxwell Natural Area

- 33 Pineridge Natural Area
- 34 Cathy Fromme Prairie Natural Area
- 35 Hazaleus Natural Area*
- 36 Colina Mariposa Natural Area*
- 37 Coyote Ridge Natural Area



Trail Systems

- * Parking Lot
- Poudre River Trail (10.2 miles)
- Spring Creek Trail (6.6 miles)
- ◆ Fossil Creek Trail (2.3 miles)
- Coyote Ridge Trail (2 miles)
- ▲ Foothills Trail (5.8 miles)



* not yet open to public

Prime Natural Areas for Wildlife Viewing

14) Cattail Chorus Natural Area ★

Size: 40 acres

Key Habitats: Naturalized gravel-mined ponds.

Description: Provides habitat for a high diversity of migrant and resident songbirds and waterfowl. The cottonwoods provide a winter roosting site for great blue herons. Yellow-headed blackbirds nest in the cattails.

Features: Access from the Poudre River Trail on pedestrian-only trail; bicycle parking at trail entrance; benches; interpretive sign.

15) Riverbend Ponds Natural Area ★

Size: 226 acres

Key Habitats: River, ponds, marshes, wet meadows, riparian forest, grasslands, and shrubs.

Description: Previously a gravel mining site, this natural area supports abundant wildlife. This is an excellent area to view waterfowl, herons, rails, bitterns, cormorants, red-winged blackbirds, shorebirds, and other wetland birds. Painted turtles, frogs, muskrats, and beavers are also seen here. During spring and fall, a variety of migrant warblers and other songbirds can be seen and heard in the forest along the river. This riparian forest also supports owls, woodpeckers, and songbirds throughout the year. Fox squirrels, cottontail rabbits, red foxes, and both white-tailed and mule deer frequent the wooded and grassland areas. The wet meadow in the boardwalk area supports the prairie gentian, a rare plant found only in a few places in Colorado.

Features: Parking lots off Prospect, Cherly, and Timberline; self-guided walk and brochure; soft-surface trails; interpretive signs; accessible fishing pier; boardwalk; benches; restroom.

16) Prospect Ponds Natural Area ★

Size: 25 acres

Key Habitats: Previously mined gravel ponds.

Description: This natural area is located along the river corridor near mature cottonwoods. The ponds provide habitat for waterfowl, especially in winter. Waterbirds, forest birds, beavers, and muskrats can be seen here.

Features: Parking lots along Sharp Point Drive; access from Poudre River Trail; interpretive signs; benches.

★This project funded in part by Great Outdoors Colorado through funds from the Colorado Lottery.

Although wildlife can be seen throughout Fort Collins, some areas have higher use than others due to size, location, and habitats. These natural areas are featured because of the amount and variety of wildlife or because of unusual characteristics. The numbers correspond to the location numbers on the map.

17) Cottonwood Hollow Natural Area ★

Size: 93 acres

Key Habitats: Previously mined gravel ponds. Gradual shoreline, wetlands.

Description: One of the two ponds has been reclaimed to create habitat specifically for shorebirds. A gradual shoreline and abundant wetland plants have been established. This natural area provides habitat for a high diversity of birds especially in the spring and summer. Red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds, egrets, herons, sandpipers, pelicans, and killdeer make use of the pond and wetlands. Warblers, kingbirds, and song sparrows nest in the uplands. Painted turtles, foxes, muskrats, and both mule deer and white-tailed deer inhabit this natural area.

Features: Parking lot off Prospect Road; soft-surface trail; interpretive features; benches; pedestrians only - no dogs, horses, or bikes.

19) Arapaho Bend Natural Area ★

Size: 278 acres

Key Habitats: Previously gravel mined ponds, riparian forest, grasslands, river.

Description: This naturalized gravel mining site has several ponds which provide habitat for bass, yellow perch, and pumpkinseed fishes. Cormorants, raccoons, beavers, rabbits, snapping turtles, and skunks also live here.

Features: Parking lots at the corner of Horsetooth Road and Strauss Cabin Road, along Strauss Cabin Road, and at the Harmony Transportation Transfer Center; 2 miles of soft-surface trails; interpretive signs; benches.

31) Reservoir Ridge Natural Area

Size: 311 acres

Key Habitats: Shortgrass prairie, foothills shrubland, foothills pine forest.

Description: This site provides key winter deer habitat, and raptors are often seen here. Views of the City, Watson Lake, and Goat Hill to the north, south, and east are spectacular.

Features: Parking lot off Centennial Drive; access from Foothills Trail.

33) Pineridge Natural Area

Size: 618 acres

Key Habitats: Shortgrass prairie, foothills shrubland, foothills pine forest.

Adjacent to 40-acre Dixon Reservoir.

Description: The site contains a large prairie dog colony. Mule deer are common, especially in winter. Red-tailed hawks nest in the pines. A variety of foothills birds and small mammals are found here. The rare Bell's twinpod grows on the ridge on the east side. The adjacent reservoir supports migrant waterfowl and other waterbirds. Pelicans, ospreys, and bald eagles use this natural area. Mature cottonwoods and willows provide habitat for migrant songbirds, including vireos and warblers. Over 150 bird species have been seen here.

Features: Parking lots at County Road 42C and at the west end of Horsetooth Road; access from Foothills Trail; 3 miles of soft-surface trails; restroom; interpretive signs; benches.

34) Cathy Fromme Prairie Natural Area ★

Size: 1,080 acres

Key Habitats: Shortgrass prairie, wetlands.

Description: This is a rare example of the Fort Collins landscape before settlement. A large prairie dog colony supports bald eagles and hawks. Horned lizards, ground-nesting songbirds, butterflies, rabbits, coyotes, rattlesnakes, and foxes live here. The rare Bell's twinpod grows on this site.

Features: Parking lots on Shields Street and off of Seneca Street; Fossil Creek Trail; raptor observation building; brochure; interpretive signs; benches; restroom.

37) Coyote Ridge Natural Area

Size: 1,118 acres

Key Habitats: Shortgrass prairie, foothills shrubland.

Description: Key habitat for mule deer, mountain lion, bears, and rattlesnakes. Rabbitbrush, mountain mahogany, and three-leaf sumac provide habitat for songbirds, lizards, rabbits, deer mice, foxes, and coyotes.

Features: Parking lot on Taft Hill Road; soft surface trail (2 miles); 1/4 mile accessible loop trail (by appointment only 224-6118); access to Rimrock trail (2 mile loop); restroom; brochure; interpretive features; benches. No dogs allowed.

Wildlife Viewing in Fort Collins

Fort Collins is located where the prairies merge with the mountains. This results in a remarkably rich diversity of wildlife in our natural areas. Wetlands, drylands, riparian forests, shortgrass prairies, foothill shrublands, and pine forests provide crucial habitat to year-round resident wildlife, as well as migrating animals that stop here on their journeys to other states and countries. Fort Collins natural areas also are homes for wildlife classified as endangered, threatened, or rare.

There is a fine line between watching wildlife and intruding upon it. Most wildlife perceive humans as a threat. Binoculars are essential for keeping the distance between you and wildlife at a comfortable level.

Watching wildlife doesn't mean using only your eyes. You often hear birds or smell skunks without ever seeing the animals. Listen for the croaking of frogs, the chirping of crickets, the rustling of small mammals scurrying through leaves on the forest floor, or the splash of a beaver's tail on a pond. Watch for signs of animals: tracks, scat, markings on trees, or trampling of vegetation.

Some other brochures available from the Natural Resources Department:

Checklist of Birds of Fort Collins


Checklist of Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians, and Fishes of Fort Collins

Native Plants of Fort Collins

Backyard Wildlife Habitat

Information.....	970-416-2815
Nature talks.....	Master Naturalist Program 416-2480, 224-6118
Problems	Natural Areas and Trails Rangers 416-2147
Life-threatening emergencies	911

The City of Fort Collins will make reasonable accommodations for access to City services, programs, and activities and will make special communication arrangements for persons with disabilities. Please call 221-6600 (TDD: 224-6001) for assistance.

 Printed on recycled paper with vegetable-based inks.



American Bittern

Trail System

City of Fort Collins trails provide excellent access to wildlife viewing areas. Extensions are planned for the future.

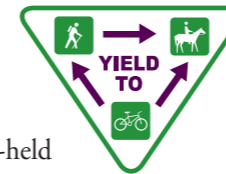
The Poudre River, Spring Creek, and Fossil Creek trails are paved and generally follow the waterways. Because of the wider riparian woods and abundance of high quality wetland habitat, wildlife is more prevalent along the Poudre River Trail than the Spring Creek Trail. The Fossil Creek Trail is adjacent to both prairie and riparian ecosystems. Don't forget to stop and enjoy the surroundings at the benches along the way.

Trail Etiquette

When using any trail please be considerate of other users.

Bicyclists yield to hikers and horses

Hikers yield to horses



Horses must stay within 10 feet of the trail.

On sites where dogs are allowed, dogs must be on a hand-held leash at all times.

Wildlife Viewing the Right Way

DO...

- ...keep pets on a hand-held leash and under control at all times.
- ...help protect fragile habitats by staying in designated areas and on trails in sensitive natural areas.
- ...speak softly and don't disturb the wildlife.
- ...respect landowners and stay off private land.

DON'T...

- ...get so close to wildlife that they change their behavior.
- ...pick up or approach sick, injured, or dead wildlife.
- ...trample plants.
- ...trespass onto private lands.

NATURE Next Door



A guide to viewing wildlife in
City of Fort Collins
local natural areas.



Community Planning and Environmental Services
Natural Resources Department
Natural Areas Program
P.O. Box 580 Fort Collins, CO 80522-0580
website: fcgov.com/naturalareas
970-416-2815