

1. Living on the Edge

If you look to the right, you'll see Wetlands. To your left, upland prairie, an increasingly rare ecosystem in Colorado. Two different habitats so close together creates a third, called edge habitat. This "edge effect" creates homes for many species, like white-tailed deer and red-tailed hawks, that prefer to graze or hunt on the prairie but use the wetlands for shelter.

2. The War of the Trees

Look around and you will see willow trees. Their strategy in nature is to out produce other species and absorb their share of nutrients and water. Over the willow trees you can see cottonwood trees. Their strategy is to get high above the ground and get as much sun and wind as possible to transport seed pods. These two types of trees battle for the right amount of nutrients, sunlight, and water.



Willow Tree



Cottonwood Tree

3. Listen Up

This area in the spring/summer time is filled with birds. The prominent birds here in the area are kestrels and marsh hawks. What do you hear?

4. Leave it to Beaver

This is called the Beaver Pond Trail. Beavers dam rivers and creeks into ponds by building dams out of logs, branches, and mud. Beavers feel safer in the water than they do on land; so, rather than walk to their food (branches, leaves, and twigs) they create a pond so they're able to swim to their food. This process creates habitat for a wide variety of species, including many types of water birds.



5. To Filter or Not to Filter?

Wetlands help filter the water for the animals and humans. Wetlands filter pollutants out of the water and make it safe for all of us to drink. Many species rely on wetlands for their survival. The wetlands also act as a sponge for the water, helping with flood control. Beavers also do their part in filtering and slowing down water with their dams.

6. See Spot Fly

Check out the sign next to this post. Can you spot any of these animals? Also see if you are able to spot a red-tailed hawk or a red winged blackbird. Pictures of these two birds are located on the back of this brochure.

7. Wanted Dead or Alive

If you look around, you will see a dead tree. You may think it should be removed, but it is actually as useful as a living tree. Trees can be dead longer than they live and they provide nutrients for other trees. They provide food for birds because insects will burrow in the tree, and that makes it easy for the birds to peck them out and eat them. Woodpeckers can not bore into a living tree, so they need dead trees to make as homes. What do you think happened to that tree?(Answer to #7 on the back of this brochure.)

8. Attention Shoppers

If you look towards the water, you will see cattails. These odd-looking plants act as a wild supermarket. All sorts of animals will eat the bugs inside the cattails or the cattail itself. No matter what form of food the animal needs, the cattail provides nutrition for them.



9. Sit Down and Relax

You have reached the end of the trail. While sitting on the bench, enjoy the view of more beautiful wetlands. Did you look over the edge? You may think it is a long drop down to the water, but sometimes the water comes up this high. Like a sponge, these wetlands can absorb a lot of water and sometimes stop bad things from happening like flooding an animal's home (or yours!).

(Answer to #7: The tree was struck by lightning.)

I hope you have enjoyed your tour!



*Red -Tailed
Hawk*

*Red Winged
Black Bird*



Hiking Tips

- Pack it in, Pack it out.
- Stay on the trail.
- Wear sturdy footwear.
- Never forget water.
- Don't feed the animals.
- Don't throw butts on the ground.
- Don't throw away your brochure, recycle it for others to use.

Please continue to explore the beauty that Cherry Creek State Park offers.

Happy Hiking!

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Colorado State Parks

CHERRY CREEK STATE PARK

Beaver Pond Self Guided Interpretative Tour



This is a 3/4 mile long trail and has 9 Points of interest for you to explore.

This tour has been provided for you by Chase Lancaster of Boy Scout Troop 12 in cooperation with Colorado State Parks