
















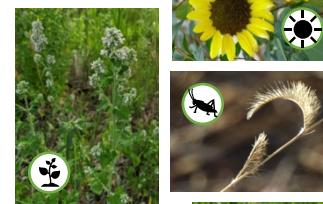


Self-Guided Hike at Morey Wildlife Reserve

The July PEEPs hike starts at the Reserve's Kiosk area (~200 ft past the gate). Flags are placed along the Reserve trail to identify features promoting the use of 4 of your 5 senses (smell, hearing, sight and touch). Each feature is listed below with a symbol and a photo to the right with a corresponding symbol to help identify the feature. Some features are located in multiple places along the trail, so you might see a symbol flag more than once. For a shorter hike, turn around at the riverside bench; for a 1/3 mile longer hike, continue around the loop through the sandbar. Finally, there is a hidden geocache in a metal cookie tin near the bench by the Kiosk for everyone to register their participation and find a treasure!

-  Female and male Willow Trees line the Reserve's path. Can you see the flowering, fluffy seeds on the female trees?
-  You can find many Mullein plants along the trail. The leaves are sometimes called "bunny ears" because they are covered in tiny hairs which look soft and fuzzy but can actually irritate sensitive skin.
-  There are many tall white flowers known as Wild Licorice. This plant helps replenish the nitrogen, an important mineral, in the soil.
-  The Russian Olive tree is considered an invasive weed. If you touch the fragrant leaves, be careful of the large thorns along the branches!
-  This is a wonderful place to be quiet and listen for many different birds. How many types of bird songs can you hear?
-  See the pale pink Crown Vetch flowers? This plant is effective at spreading quickly and holding soil in place to help minimize erosion.
-  Just off the trail is evidence of Elk activity, including markings on a few trees and, in some areas, flattened grass used for an Elk nap! Watch out for Elk poop!
-  There are ripe Chokecherry Shrubs on both sides of the trail. These plants love being in the sun and their berries are a bright red color.
-  Here you can smell the patches of Sweet White Clover. Listen closely and keep an eye out for wild bees!
-  Bright yellow Wild Sunflowers are growing between other grasses and bushes. Some types of these flowers can become 10 feet tall!
-  The Wild Mint smell great when you rub a leaf between your fingers. You will know it is a Mint plant because the stem is square, not round.
-  Notice the sprinkling of Blue Grama Grass. This native grass was selected to be Colorado's State Grass in 1987. It can be identified by its seed heads, which resemble eyelashes.
-  Watch closely for baby toads all around the river and the bench. They were so fast, we could not even get a photo!
-  Carefully step around the Silene plant in the middle of the trail. Also known as Catchfly, there are almost 700 types of this plant!
-  Close to the Big Thompson River is a plant called Scouringrush Horsetail or Snake Grass. It has been used to clean cooking pots and pans, although it might scratch softer metals, such as aluminum.
-  If you take the longer loop, you will see shiny rocks in the sandbar. These are pieces of Mica deposited by the 2013 flood.
-  Find the temporary geocache near the Kiosk and bench at the trailhead, hidden under a few rocks. Inside the metal tin are treasures to keep!



***Please sign the registration in the hidden geocache if you experienced the self-guided trail!**