



Indiana Native  
Plant Society

**MICHIGAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY,  
SOUTHWESTERN CHAPTER  
&  
INDIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
FIELD TRIP**

**Tefft Savanna Nature Preserve**

**Scott Namestnik  
Indiana State Botanist  
Saturday September 12, 2026,  
10am - noon Central, (11am -1pm Eastern)**

Tefft Savanna Nature Preserve is a 480-acre portion of the 8,000-acre Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area. The preserve supports a complex of natural communities which are now rare in Michigan and Indiana. The upland dune ridges support a fire-dependent savanna and woodland dominated by black oak (*Quercus velutina*) with a shrub layer of blueberry (*Vaccinium* spp.) and huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*) and abundant sand-loving forbs and graminoids in the herbaceous stratum. In treeless areas, dry sand prairie is present. Between the ridges are acid flats and depressions comprised of inland coastal plain marsh natural communities in treeless areas and a pin oak (*Q. palustris*) and black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) overstory in areas that have become forested. Over 260 plant species have been identified in the preserve, and more than 30 of these are listed as threatened or endangered in Indiana.

We will spend our time during this hike exploring the sand prairie and savanna communities. Mostly level ground on a firebreak lane makes this a moderate walk. Mosquito repellent and/or netting, sunscreen, water, and suitable clothing are suggested. Bring your lunch! We'll picnic in the parking lot at the conclusion of the trip.

Scott Namestnik is the Botanist at the Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center, which is part of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources—Division of Fish, Wildlife & Nature Preserves. Much of his work involves conducting botanical inventories, assessing sites for protection consideration, and documenting and monitoring occurrences of endangered and threatened species. He has a degree in Botany with a focus in Environmental Science and almost 30 years of experience with the flora of the Great Lakes region and the Midwestern United States. Scott's written work on the flora has appeared in several peer-reviewed journals including *The Michigan Botanist*, *The Great Lakes Botanist*, *Phytoneuron*, *Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science*, and *Rhodora*, and he is co-author of *Wildflowers of the Midwest* (Timber Press) and *Wildflowers of the Indiana Dunes National Park* (Indiana University Press). He currently serves as a board member for NatureCITE and South Bend-Elkhart Bird Alliance and is on the advisory council for Shirley Heinze Land Trust and the planning committee for the Indiana Dunes Birding Festival. He serves as the Indiana Native Plant Society Journal team leader, is on the board of the Indiana Native Plant Society – North Chapter and is active with the Indiana Academy of Science.

**Carpooling:** If you are interested in carpooling from Kalamazoo, meet at the Oakland/Vincent Ave Park'n Ride lot at 8:30 am Eastern on Saturday 12sep2026. The coordinates are: 42.239108673721454, -85.6156874853463.

**Directions:** The approximate address is 10240 County Rd 400 E, Wheatfield IN 46392. The coordinates are 41.1612400000, -86.9690350000. Directions from Kalamazoo: Take I-94 west to Michigan City, IN. Take exit 40B to US-20 west (Michigan Blvd). In 0.8 miles, continue on US-20 west by merging onto St Rd 212. In 1.7 miles, turn left (south) on to Johnson Rd. In 1.1 miles, turn right on to W 450 Rd (Renner Dr) and then left (south) on to N Wozniak Rd. In 7.8 miles, turn right (west) on to IN-2. In 2.1 miles, turn left (south) on to US-421. Stay on US-421 south for 26 miles, then turn right (west) on to IN-10. In 4 miles, turn left (south) on to County Rd 400. In 1.8 miles, the small parking lot is on the west side of the road.