

The Next Time You're in the UP, Visit Brockway Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary

By: Tom Funke

¶ 1

~~If it is hawks you seek, Brockway is for you.~~

¶ 2

~~Brockway is also for those wishing to find rare plants, examples of boreal forest, and rock outcroppings.~~

If you wish to discover hawks, rare plants, rock outcroppings, and examples of boreal forest, then a visit to Keweenaw County in the Upper Peninsula is a trip for you.

¶ 3

~~An appealing feature is y~~You can experience all of this by hiking less than a mile through the 400-acre Brockway Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary. ~~O~~wned and managed by the Michigan Audubon Society. ~~t~~The real heroes in preserving this sanctuary ~~is~~are the members of the Copper Country Audubon Society. ~~-~~For years, they have been raising money to buy land in Keweenaw County.

¶ 4

May is a particularly great month for hawk watching, as ~~they~~hawks find their way north and use the Keweenaw Peninsula as a launching-off point to Canada. At this time of year, ~~F~~lowers are diverse and abundant, including such varieties as the twinflower, the orchids, and the rare ~~W~~ild ~~L~~ilac, the last of which is only found in Keweenaw County.

¶ 5

As you walk through ~~T~~he stem of ~~thise~~lollipop-shaped ~~Oren Krum-T~~trail, you'll notice that it is initially obscured by heavy vegetation and is thick with grasses and ferns. ~~begins heavily vegetated and thick with grasses and ferns, obscuring the trail.~~ In about 100 yards, the trail enters a thick cedar and white spruce forest ~~which is~~ at a late pioneer stage. ~~Looking up in~~At a higher elevation, early pioneering trees like paper birch and poplar are starting to take hold.

¶ 6

At the trail intersection, which isn't all that noticeable, veer left ~~in a clockwise~~ ~~motion~~. Climb up some rock outcroppings and look for a ~~greenish tint~~. Exposed by glaciers when they receded 10,000 years ago, native copper is still present in many of ~~the~~ Keweenaw's rock formations. ~~Up~~ ~~O~~en top of the ridge, you'll veer west. ~~In this area~~ ~~A forest fire ripped through the area~~ ninety years ago, ~~a forest fire ripped through the area~~ and the charcoal that you may see on the ground is a sign of this event that lingers today. ~~Signs of this event still linger today. Look for what appears to be charcoal on the ground.~~

Comment [K1]: I believe the phrase "in a clockwise motion" is used to emphasize that an individual would veer left at this point in the trail, which has already been stated. Does this make the "clockwise" detail redundant, or is it still necessary to explain?

Comment [K2]: This sounds a bit vague and slightly confusing; readers may not know what this refers to. Can this be rephrased?

¶ 7

~~Three-tenths of a mile into your journey, you'll head west and come to a~~ ~~Heading~~ ~~west at 0.3 miles~~, thin forest ~~at~~ ~~make up~~ the top of the ridge with loose footing underneath. The soil is thin and the climate ~~is~~ harsh, making it difficult for trees to take hold. It has been nearly one hundred years since the last major disturbance and the forest is barely taking hold even now.

Comment [K3]: The original sentence implies that three-tenths of a mile into the journey, a person will head west and reach a thin forest. Is this correct, or do you mean to say that a person would head west for another three-tenths of a mile before reaching the forest?

¶ 8

A spur trail at 0.4 miles to Lookout Point will give you another chance to scan for native copper, this time ~~under-foot~~. On a clear day, you can see Lake Superior to the south. ~~On a foggy day, which is much more likely, you'll be lucky to see Brockway Mountain Drive~~ ~~only~~ a few tenths of a mile from your current location.

Comment [K4]: Delete interior space.

¶ 9

The trail bends back to the west, taking you back downhill. Traversing through an area where trees were blown down during a storm, you'll be reunited with the stem ~~portion of the trail, and you'll recognize your surroundings from earlier in~~ ~~You'll have that "hey, I've been here" feel about~~ your hike. Turning around, you'll see the beginning of your hike splitting ~~off to the~~ left.

¶ 10

An ideal time to visit and explore Brockway is in the late spring. You'll get the chance to see ~~Late spring is a great time to view~~ migrating warblers and. ~~Other~~ common residents, includeing winter wrens, ruffed grouse, and least chipmunks.

¶ 11

The Oren Krumm Trail provides access to some of the natural wonders Brockway has to offer visitors. The rolling trail is ~~rolling and~~ has many roots and rock outcroppings, so wear ~~rugged~~ footwear suitable for rugged terrain. Driving ~~F~~rom Eagle Harbor, you can find the trail by takeing Brockway Mountain Drive for seven miles and looking for an entrance sign on the north side of the road.

Tom Funke is a freelance writer and both the ~~V~~ice-~~P~~resident of ~~O~~perations ~~for the Michigan Audubon Society~~, and the ~~is~~ ~~C~~onservation ~~D~~irector of Michigan Audubon. ~~Also,~~ ~~h~~He also serves as ~~R~~esident ~~M~~anager of Otis Sanctuary.