

The Mentor Graham's Footsteps Trail begins off of the south end of the Visitor Center Parking Lot. It is identified with a large white, round sign. The first four trails can be walked in the order shown, and be completed as a loop, returning to the starting point.

Mentor Graham's Footsteps

- 1) This trail winds through a typical central Illinois forest. Stay on the trail, as poison ivy is common as a vine or small shrub.
- 2) Dead trees are a natural habitat for woodpeckers, raccoons and insects.
- 3) This Shagbark Hickory provides a nut that is a favorite of squirrels.
- 4) Rocky Branch Creek flows over Ordovician age limestone rocks. Look for the Christmas Fern.
- 5) Black Walnut trees are valued by furniture makers. Wildlife enjoys the nuts.
- 6) Look for the double trunked trees which are stump sprouts from when the woods were cut 80 to 100 years ago
- 7) Identify the large Red Oak trees by the lobes of the leaves which end in sharp points. The wood is very strong and was used for logs for buildings.
- 8) Here are several large White Oak trees which have leaves with rounded lobes. The White Oak is the Illinois State Tree. The Cardinal is the State Bird and the White Tailed Deer is the State Mammal.
- 9) The bricks identify where the original schoolhouse, used by Mentor Graham, stood. The schoolhouse was build prior to 1830. It was reconstructed in the 1930s, which is when a brick fireplace was added. The schoolhouse was moved to the village in 1966.
- 10) Sugar Maples, among the Oaks, where used to collect sap which was boiled to make maple syrup.
- 11) Five graves remain from the Bale family and one from the Ferguson's.
- 12) Large Whites Oak trees.
- 13) This cabin was built by the CCC in the depression years of the 1930s.

Cardinal Ridge Trail

This trail is a loop that can be entered from three points. If entered from the restaurant parking lot, it is a very flat and is great for Cross Country skiing. If entered from Rt. 97, access begins with a very steep climb. Trees are marked as follows:

1) Black Walnut	8) Ohio Buckeye
2) White Oak	9) Eastern Redbud
3) Hackberry	10) Sassafras
4) Black Cherry	11) Shagbark Hickory
5) Honey Locust	12) Black Oak
6) Sugar Maple	13) Slippery Elm
7) Cottonwood	14) Mockernut Hickory

Shady Hollow Trail

This trail can be started across from the south exit from the Cardinal Ridge Trail. From there, it is a gentle winding and downward slope to the Sangamon river and a very nice picnic area.

Damselfly Trail

The Damselfly Trail runs parallel to the Sangamon River between the picnic area and the Saw Grist Mill. Much of this trail follows an old blacktop road, the Pritcherville Road. From the Saw Grist Mill, walk a short distance south to the walkway over Route 97 and return to the Historic Village.

Poison Ivy is a highly disliked plant. The oil from the plant can cause serious irritation and rash. It can be in the form of a small plant, vine or shrub. The leaves are serrated and in clusters of three.

Honeysuckle is a woody shrub with smooth opposite leaves that is choking out much of the natural undergrowth of the forest.

Shickshack Trail

The Shickshack Trail has three entry/exit points. The primary point is off of the restaurant parking lot.

Shickshack was a Winnebago Chief who was the last Indian Chief in Illinois, south of the Sangamon. His name is said to signify, Rising Sun. The date of his coming to the Sangamon country is believed to be some time after the war of 1812-14 with England was terminated. The Winnebagos held the territory from the upper reaches of the Illinois and Rock Rivers northward to and beyond the Wisconsin River. Shickshack left his people to avoid their interminable forays upon the Chippewas and other nearby tribes. He came to the Sangamon where fish and game were plentiful, that he might live in peace and quietude. He was always well disposed to the whites, treating them with the utmost respect. He was a tobacco smoker, but would not tolerate liquor drinking in his camp.

Shickshack had two wives – as some others of his band also had. One of his wives, named Lo-Lo, was a Winnebago whom he had married before leaving his tribe. The other, named Mah-qua-la, was a Kickapoo squaw he married probably because of diplomatic considerations after he had squatted on the territory of her people.

Mah-qua-la had three children, all girls. Lo-lo had one child, a boy named Goo-may. Though the two squaws had separate lodges, in close proximity, they shared the cooking and all other domestic work, and the four children seemed the property of both in common