

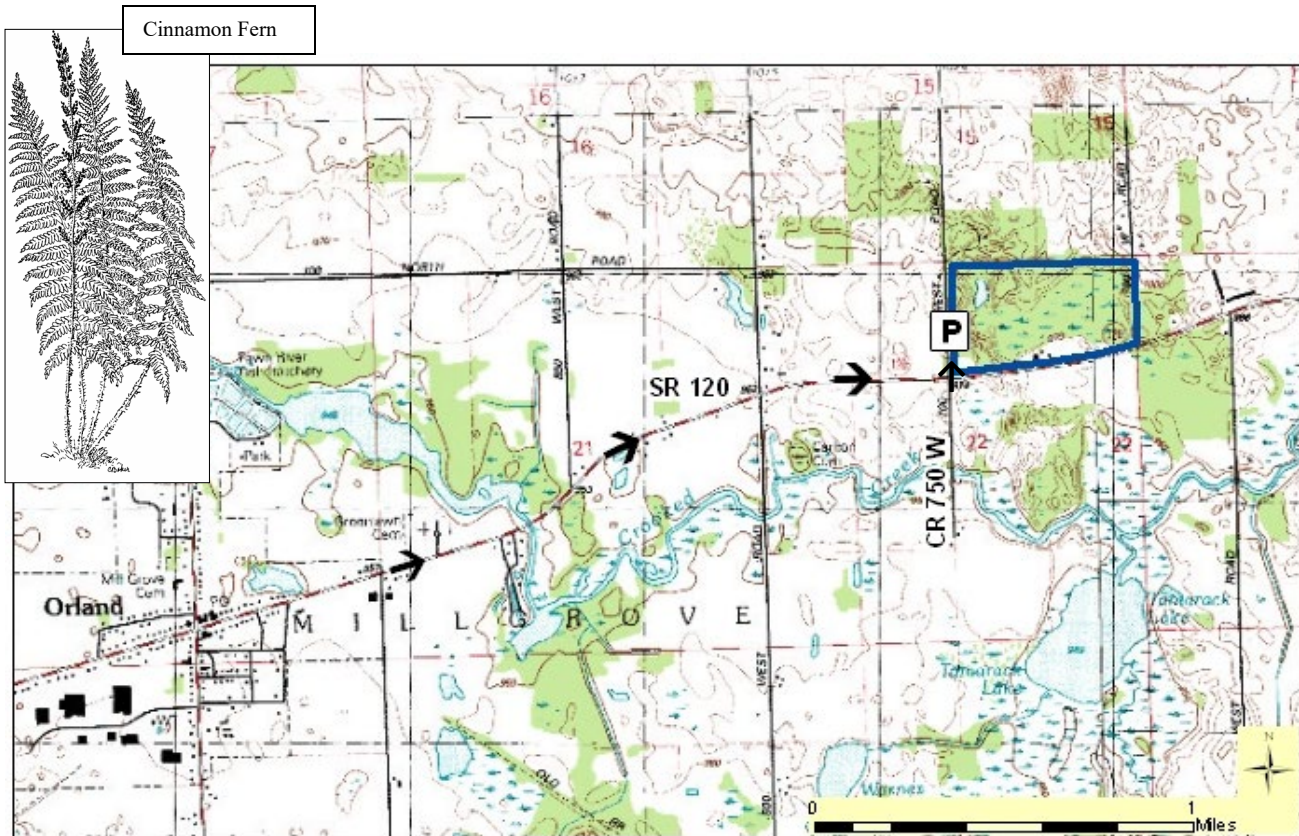
Ropchan Memorial Nature Preserve

County: Steuben Size: 77 acres
Ownership: ACRES Land Trust



Location and Access

Parking and trail. Go 2 miles east of Orland on SR 120, then 0.13 mile north on CR 750W to a parking lot. A nature trail traverses the preserve.



Description: The diversity of geological features—morainal ridges, kettle holes, swamps, and bogs—contributes to a good floral distribution. Sandy loam ridges surround pockets of muck and peat. These higher and drier portions support associations of shagbark hickory, white, red, and black oak, wild black cherry, and sassafras interspersed with occasional clumps of largetooth aspen. Red maple becomes common as soil moisture increases on lower slopes and dominates where water remains on the surface. Tamarack and yellow birch replace red maple in the deeper peat pockets and swamps. A lone native white pine stands in a very deep sphagnum moss deposit. Soil moisture also influences the understory. Look for hazelnut, dogwood, and poison ivy among brambles of blackberry and raspberry on dry sites. Prickly ash and highbush blueberry become more frequent on lower ground bordering red maple swamps. Winterberry and mountain holly are found around the swamp edges. In places, shallow-rooted red maples have fallen, creating hummocks covered with the large spreading fronds of cinnamon fern.

Further Information:

ACRES Land Trust, 1802 Chapman Rd, Huntertown, IN 46748. (260) 637-2273. www.acreslandtrust.org
Division of Nature Preserves Northeast Regional Ecologist, Adam Balzer: abalzer@dnr.in.gov