

A PEACEFUL OASIS IN THE CITY



As you walk into Willow Reserve, the sounds of the city are replaced by songbirds perched in the trees overhead, leaves rustling in the wind, and a sense of peacefulness. On occasion, a passing train reminds you that you haven't left the city just yet. With each step, there is so much to see.

Sawtooth Sunflowers

Sawtooth Sunflowers grow along the edges of the pond. Standing at 6-10 feet tall, they include bright, yellow flowers that bloom from late summer through early fall.

Red Elderberry

Red Elderberry is a common native shrub with eye-catching white blossoms and red berries during spring and summer months. The berries are an excellent source of food for many birds.

Winter Wildlife

Look for the footprints of animals such as deer, fox, and turkeys on snowy days and in muddy areas. How many different kinds of footprints can you find?



Pollinators

Pollinators visit flowers in search of food such as nectar or pollen. They carry pollen to other plants, helping them produce seeds or fruits. People rely on pollinators for 1 out of 3 bites of food each day.

Wood Ducks

Wood Ducks forage for seeds, berries, plants, and insects in the pond. The males are beautiful with chestnut and green coloring. They pair up each spring and nest in trees up to 65 feet tall.

Boreal Chorus Frogs

Boreal Chorus Frogs are just over one inch long with large toe pads to help them climb trees. The male frogs attract females by making a sound like running your fingers along the edge of a comb.

Bee Balm

Bee Balm, also called Wild Bergamot, is native to Minnesota. It grows up to 6 feet tall and has pink or red tube-like flowers throughout late summer that are perfect for bees and hummingbirds.

Redwing Black Birds

The reserve is home to more than 30 species of birds. The male Red Wing Blackbird is easy to spot with its red and yellow shoulders. They breed and perch in wetlands and fiercely protect their nests.

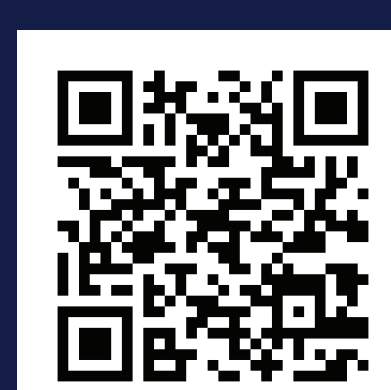
History of Willow Reserve

The Mdewakanton Dakota lived in their village of Kopsia located east of the Mississippi River for decades. It was moved to the west side of the river, which is now Saint Paul, after a treaty between the Dakota and United States Government transferred the land to the United States.

Settlers with interests in farming, fur trading and harvesting lumber moved to Saint Paul. The land known as Willow Reserve changed hands many times. Neighbors began advocating for its protection in the 1960s and Saint Paul formerly established Willow Reserve in 1977.

Mississippi Flyway

A natural resource inventory identified Willow Reserve as a critical stopover for migratory birds to rest and refuel during their journey along the Mississippi Flyway.



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