

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

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The Minna Anthony Common Nature Center is rapidly becoming an attraction for birders and all interested in nature and the outdoors. It was named for the late Mrs. Common who for many years maintained a nature trail on Wellesley Island. Mrs. Common was the founder and first president of the North Country Bird Club.

The Nature Center is on the western end of Wellesley Island in the beautiful Thousand Islands section of the St. Lawrence River. It has an area of 600 acres with water on three sides and contains a variety of habitats. It is maintained by the Thousand Islands State Park Commission. Robert Wakefield is the naturalist in charge.

The visitor should park at the museum. There he can see maps of the area. Perhaps there is some special event scheduled for that day, or he may go on a guided tour or explore a trail by himself. The exhibits in the museum are designed to interpret the natural history of the Nature Center. They include displays of birds, insects, plants and rocks. The two 400-gallon aquariums contain fish native to this area.

Development of the Nature Center began in 1967. Loop trails totaling eight miles were planned, and most of them are now completed. The trails pass through the woods and near swamps, ponds and the shores of Eel Bay so that one sees a variety of plants, animals and rocks. Goshawks have nested in the woods, and Wild Turkeys are often seen.

The Nature Center is reached by taking U.S. Rt. 81. When going north, cross the American span and turn off about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile beyond the foot of the bridge. Make a second and third right turn and go under 81. Go west from the bridge $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the Cross Island Road. Go north $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the Nature Center turnoff. The Cross Island Road also leads to the Wellesley Island State Park where there are camping and other facilities. The Nature Center is open every day except for a few holidays.

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