

Spring 2024 Hiking Schedule

March

Tues 3/5 Winona Lake loop - Winona (Winona Visitor's Center 924 Lake Park Dr): 3.5 miles, flat paved trail (**moderate**). Possible alternative: Winona Bluffsides Park trail.

Time: 10:00am at Winona Visitor's Center parking lot or 9:15am carpool departure at the **Unitarian Universalist Fellowship** parking lot.

Sat 3/23 Root River Section Pool 8 Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (**easy**): 2 miles round trip, flat trail. Beautiful scenery of the river and bluffs

Time: 10:00am at La Crescent Area Event Center (595 Veterans Parkway) or 9:45am carpooling departure from **Unitarian Universalist Fellowship** parking lot.

April

Tues 4/2 Grandad Bluff Trail System - North Compass, 1909 and South Compass (**easy/moderate**): 2 miles with some gentle ups and downs, amazing views of rock outcroppings and the bluffs of the La Crosse/La Crescent area.

Time: 9:00am at parking lot on north side of Grandad Bluff Road. Directions: proceed up Bliss Road and just before the Alpine Inn take the hairpin turn to right onto Grandad Bluff Road. The parking lot is hard to see — located on the right-hand side of the road that has **Grandad Park** sign in front of it (just past the house with all the flags on right side of road). No carpooling needed.

Sat 4/27 Great River Bike Trail - Lytle's Landing, Brice Prairie (**easy**): 2 miles, flat trail along Black River bottomland forest

Time: 9:00 at Lytle's Landing parking lot. Directions: proceed north of Holmen on HWY 35, left on County Z onto Brice Prairie, continue north on County Z, near end of Z take right on Lytle Road or 8:30 carpool departure from **Unitarian Universalist Fellowship** parking lot.

May

Tues 5/7 Mathy Quarry Loop Upper Hixon Forest area (**moderate**)
2 miles for loop trail around the quarry (one downhill stretch, one uphill stretch) + side trail options

Time: 9:00 at the trailhead in the Mathy Quarry parking lot at the end of County FA or 8:45 carpooling departure from **Unitarian Universalist Fellowship** parking lot.

Sat 5/25 Tunnelville Cliffs East, Vernon County (**moderate**): 2.4 miles round trip, 315 feet ascent

Time: 9:00am at trailhead parking lot (intersection of Husker Hollow Road and Tunnelville Road: proceed about 2 miles east-southeast on Tunnelville Road) or 8:00am carpool departure from Unitarian Universalist Fellowship parking lot.

Trail Difficulty

1. *Easy: 1-2 miles with easy terrain and little elevation gain*
2. *Moderate: 2-4 miles with moderate terrain and some elevation gain*
3. *Challenging: 4 or more miles or varying terrain*

This hiking list has been developed by the Unitarian Universalist Outdoor Group and the First Congregational UCC Creation Care Committee. These are self-led hikes (not church-sponsored), and hiking is at your own risk. We have attempted to give you enough information about each hike to determine whether it is a good fit for your interest and abilities. Feel free to invite family members and friends to participate. Kids, accompanied by responsible adults, are welcome to join! Pets are discouraged for these hikes and are prohibited on some local trails.

Hikes will not occur if severe weather is in the forecast or if wet weather has left trails vulnerable to erosion, but no announcements regarding cancellations will be made. Always be prepared with enough water and snacks to meet your own needs. Consider using walking shoes or hiking boots; hiking poles can be helpful, though are not needed for easier hikes. Also, when hiking in the winter, please consider using traction devices for boots such as micro spikes or yaktrax, which can help reduce slips and falls.

Carpooling is encouraged, with a meet up location at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship parking lot (401 West Ave S La Crosse, WI).

Other organized hiking opportunities in this area:

*[La Crescent-Hokah Driftless Drifters Hiking Club](#) (weekly and monthly hikes)
[Mississippi Valley Conservancy](#) (Trail Trek Challenge, Hike of the Month)*