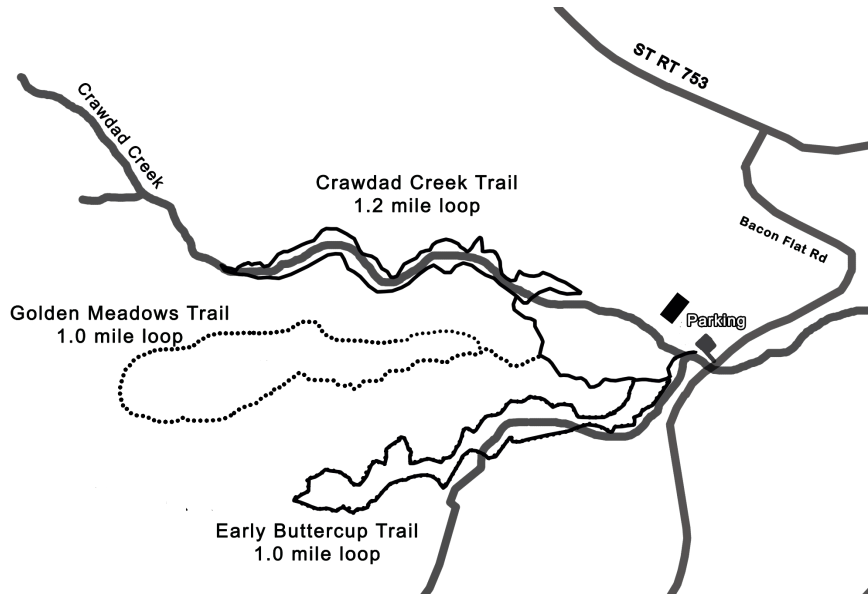




**VISITING & HIKING**  
**Chalet Nivale Nature Preserve, Arc of Appalachia**



*The Arc of Appalachia's operations are 100% supported by private donations. If you love what we do, [please support us](#), so we can continue to expand our wildlands preservation work and trail stewardship.*



Dogs are not permitted at Chalet Nivale. Please see [Hiking Arc Preserves](#) for dog-friendly trails.

**Hiking Trails (3 trails):** **Crawdad Creek Trail 1.2 mile loop** explores the banks of a headwater stream as well as the rim of the 30-foot dolomite rock walls that border the shallow canyon. **Early Buttercup Trail 1.0 mile loop** follows a second headwater stream that has carved out a moist, heavily- shaded hollow, rich in spring wildflowers and bordered by steep rocky hillsides. **Golden Meadows Trail 1.0 mile loop** winds through old field habitat that glows in golden hues in the autumn due to its dense stands of goldenrod.

**You are entering a highly protected nature preserve.** Regulations exist to protect the natural communities from the impact of public visitors. Please follow these regulations to leave Chalet Nivale as pristine as you found it. Remain on trails at all times and walk in single file to protect bulbs of native wildflowers bordering the trail which are vulnerable to soil compaction. Do not disturb, pick, or collect flowers, plants, rocks, or wildlife. Hunting, caving, fishing, trail biking, rock climbing, wading, campfires, and swimming are prohibited.

**Address:** 1272 Bacon Flat Rd, Peebles, OH 45660 38.9736529836, -83.349097942

**Directions:** Chalet Nivale is north of OH-32 and east of Peebles, OH. **From the North:** From OH-41 south, turn left on OH-73 in Locust Grove (on the far side of town). In 1.9 miles turn right on Bacon Flat Road. Continue on Bacon Flat Road for .3 miles. The preserve is signed and will be on your right. Park in the gravel parking lot. **From the South:** From OH-32 (Appalachian Highway), turn left on the OH-73 exit, which lies 5.2 miles east of the OH-41 exit. Follow OH-73 for .5 miles and turn left on Bacon Flat Road. Continue on Bacon Flat Road for .3 miles. The preserve is signed and will be on your right. Park in the gravel parking lot and follow the trail to the interpretive kiosk and trailhead.

**Interpretive kiosk:** An interpretive kiosk is located at the trailhead. We encourage you to take a picture of the trail map with your phone before hiking the trails.

**Trails are open from sunrise to sunset.** Note: Parking lots are not winter-maintained. Do not hike during trails during periods of heavy rain, ice, and snow. Note that trails are closed during the annual deer management hunt which takes place on the 1) Monday through Sunday following Thanksgiving, and 2) Saturday and Sunday before Christmas.

**Warning: Trails border dangerous, potentially life-threatening cliffs:** Please be careful. Trails can be narrow, uneven, and steep, with some unimproved creek crossings. Keep children close at hand, and stay on the trail.

**You are entering karst country.** The dolomite bedrock of 107-acre Chalet Nivale creates a compelling karst-country landscape of cliffs, springs, seeps, grottos, and sinkholes. The bedrock is dolomite, a type of limestone that has high concentrations of both calcium and magnesium. These minerals tint the preserve's crystal clear waters a lovely faint blue. Like most soils derived from limestone, those at Chalet Nivale tend to be thin, powdery, and alkaline, supporting a unique and very rich assemblage of plants.

**Alkaline-loving plants:** Several woody species at Chalet Nivale are especially adapted to alkaline soils, such as chinquapin oak, leatherwood, and white cedar. The ancient white cedars clinging to the rim of the cliffs are isolated hundreds of miles south of their primary range in Canada.

Deep in the gorge, plant life is exceptionally lush with plants that are dependent upon karst habitats. Rare ferns, including smooth cliffbrake, cling to the vertical rock walls, liverworts cover the rocks, and mosses carpet every fallen log. Chalet Nivale supports unusually large colonies of the rare snow trillium, *Trillium nivale*, found on exposed bedrock and in the gravelly bottomlands. This species's name for the world's smallest trillium contributes "nivale" to the preserve's name. Snow trillium is the first wildflower to emerge in spring and is often dusted with late winter snow. Another rare spring wildflower at Chalet Nivale is Walter's violet, the smallest violet in the eastern United States. Look for it on the thin soils of limestone bluff outcrops and fallen boulders.

Because the soils at Chalet Nivale are so poor, with an approximate twelve-foot rise in ground elevation above the sheltered waterways the soil can become severely dry. In these slightly higher elevations, the understory harbors a few distinct species from a very rare prairie ecosystem known as Cedar Barrens. In Ohio, this globally rare prairie is almost entirely restricted to Adams County. Here at Chalet Nivale be on the lookout for such uncommon woodland prairie plants as anglepod (a climbing milkweed that is also called milk vine) and tall larkspur.

**Ohio's cleanest streams:** Both of Chalet Nivale's headwater streams drain into the Scioto Brush Creek watershed. When tested several years ago, one stream actually earned a perfect *Biotic Integrity Index Score* (practically unheard of), and the second stream scored almost as high. Such stellar rankings meant that for their size, both streams possessed a high diversity of fish species, exceptionally clean water, and a high production of aquatic insects and invertebrates which fuels the richness of the aquatic ecosystem. Unfortunately in more recent years, quarrying without the use of best practices has been occurring in the drainage of Crawdad Creek, causing severe sedimentation into what used to be a crystal clear stream. We are actively working with the neighboring business and Ohio EPA to seek to remedy this negative impact.

**Preserve history:** In the decades preceding the 21st century, Ohio botanists raved about their beloved botanical hotspot on Bacon Flat Road in Adams County. When a log home was built on the site in the 1980s, it was presumed to be the end of a significant botanical site. However, in 2004, the Arc of Appalachia had a chance to buy two tracts in the cove totaling a mere fifteen acres which included the house. In 2008, the Arc purchased a third 90-acre tract that had recently been logged and grazed by cattle but contained most of the present-day preserve's stream corridors. The preserve's vacant log home will be dismantled in the near future to restore the preserve's wilderness ambiance.