

# Prairie Plant Identification

Over 100 species of plants grow in the tall grass prairie. Here are just a few:

## Big Bluestem

*Andropogon gerardii*  
Blooms: Aug. – Oct.  
Plant Height 4' -9'



Big bluestem is a sod-forming bunch of grass and was the most prominent species of the North American tall grass prairie. Its alternate name, *Turkey Foot*, describes the three-branched seed heads which mature in late summer.



## Indian Grass

*Sorghastrum nutans*  
Blooms: July – Sep.  
Plant Height: 3'-7'

Indian grass is the second most prevalent species of the tall grass prairie. Growing to an average height of 7 feet, Indian grass is an upright clump-forming plant, which varies from yellow to bright orange in autumn. Indian grass is identifiable by the large seed head and bright yellow pollen sacs.

## Switch Grass

*Panicum virgatum*  
Blooms: Aug. – Oct.  
Plant Height 4' -7'



Switch grass is a prolific member of the prairie society with long branching stems supporting tiny seeds on the end of each branch. Research is currently being conducted on this plant for a new form of bio-fuel that is more efficient than corn.



## Showy Goldenrod

*Solidago speciosa*  
Blooms: July – Oct.  
Plant Height: 2'-7'

Showy Goldenrod is but one of the many species of Goldenrod growing in this region. This plant begins blooming in mid summer and produces columnar clusters of attractive yellow flowers.

## Tall Ironweed

*Vernonia gigantea*  
Blooms: July - Oct.  
Plant Height: 3'-7'



Ironweed is a hardy native wildflower that adds color to the sun-parched prairie. Visible from mid summer to mid fall, the mature blooms are deep purple and comprised of 13-30 tiny individual flower heads. The dried stems are dark brown with tan seed heads.



## McCloud Nature Park Prairie Maze Map

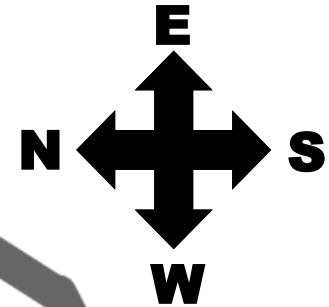


## McCloud Nature Park

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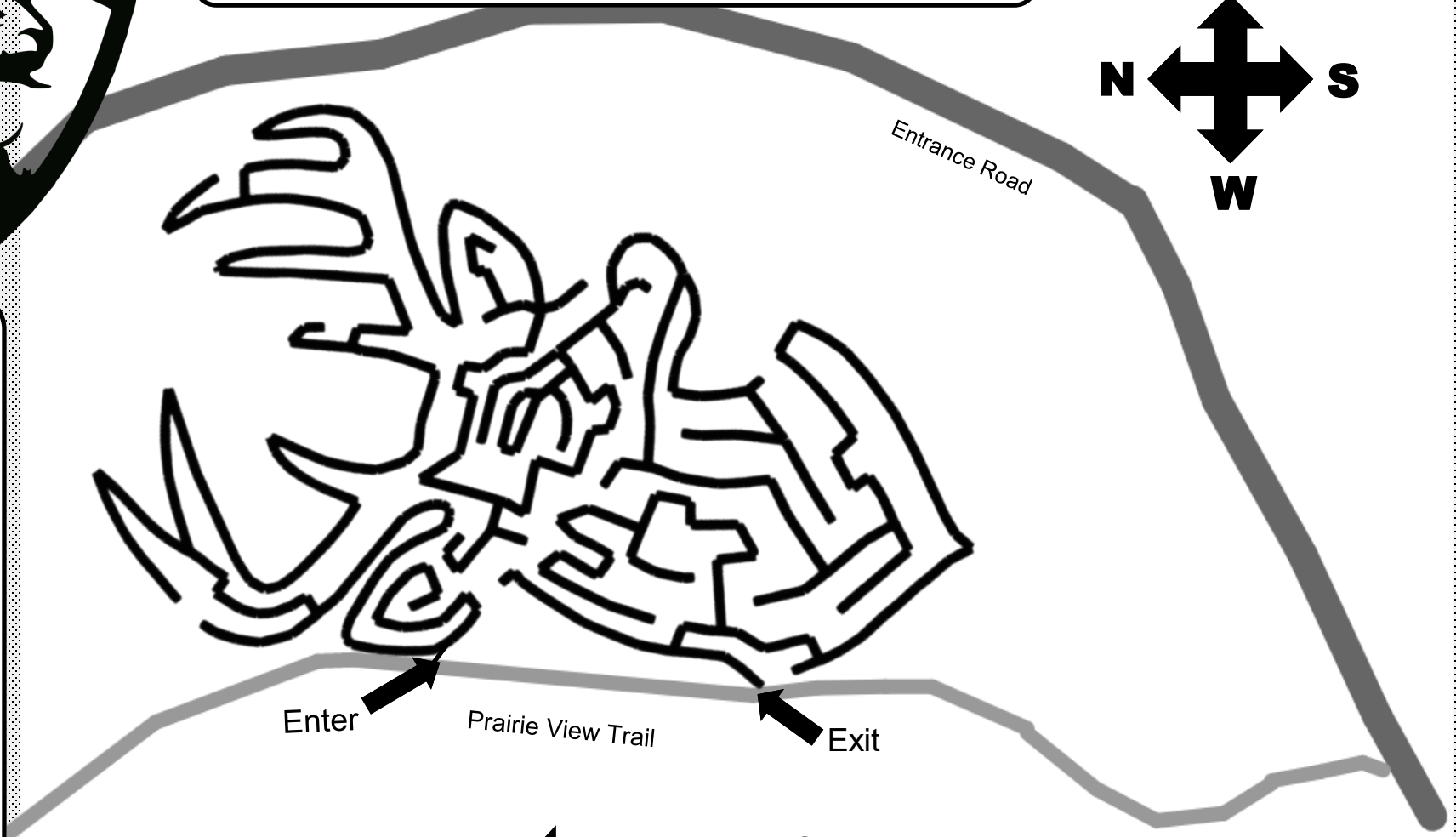


### Maze Rules

No smoking in the maze.

Watch your step for uneven ground.

Do **NOT** create your own path through the prairie grass.



← To Nature Center

**(Black lines are the trails.)**