fronds. Bog buckbean and leatherleaf bloom in abundance. A great variety of songbirds, waterfowl and wading birds stop by as they migrate north to their summer nesting areas.

As spring moves into summer, the orchids appear, including the delicate grass pink and rose pogonia. Great blue and green herons, sandhill cranes, white-tailed deer, mink, muskrat, raccoons and many other smaller creatures are often observed.

Fall is one of the most dramatic seasons and features the gold of the tamarack needles, the red of poison sumac and the greens of sphagnum moss.

Winter is a good time to identify trees and shrubs by their bark. The bright red berries of the winterberry holly and maroon leaves of the leatherleaf are a striking contrast to the bright whiteness of the snow-covered ground. Animal tracks in the snow provide evidence of life in the bog—muskrat, weasel and rabbits make their homes in the preserve. Periodically, when seed availability to the north is small, crossbills will visit the bog and can be observed cracking open tamarack cones.

**Trails**

**Volo Bog Interpretive Trail:** Designed for hikers only, this half-mile interpretive loop leads visitors through each stage of bog succession. It is constructed of wood dock sections, boardwalks and a wood-chipped path. Trail brochures, adapted for each season, are available at the visitor center.

**Tamarack View Trail:** This 3.0-mile is designed only for hiking and, when there is a minimum snow base of 6 inches, cross-country skiing. As park visitors traverse through woods, wetlands, fields and prairie, they are given the opportunity to observe the diverse natural communities within the park. From higher elevations along the trail, they can look into the Volo Bog basin and view tamarack trees, which are listed as a threatened species in Illinois. The trail begins southeast of the visitor center and goes counterclockwise. It’s especially advisable to move in this direction when skiers are on the trail to avoid accidents.