

Late October 2025

St. Olaf Natural Lands

Afternoon Adventure: Lower Heath Creek

● **Access Points:** Access Lower Heath Creek Trail from the [Armstrong Road parking lot](#) or from the [grassy parking space](#) across from Upper Heath Creek and Hwy 19 (you'll need to walk a bit)

Time: 20 minutes

Accessibility: Lower Heath Creek Trail consists entirely of a footpath that skirts Heath Creek. There are many small dips, ruts, and roots in addition to larger inclines and declines. Not an easy path.

Trail Description: Lower Heath Creek Trail ambles beside the gurgling river on one side and an in-progress oak savanna on the other side, beyond the taller trees. It's a narrow, quiet route.

Points of Ecological Interest: This trail is for the forest-bathers. Still and serene, it's perfect for making plant observations, identifying bird calls, and spying woodland creatures. At this time of year, the maples slice the air with their red, orange, mango, lemon, and dark purple hues where they stand amidst [basswoods](#) and bank-hugging [willows](#). You'll see plentiful color in the undergrowth too though: crimson [Jack-in-the-Pulpits](#) and creamsicle-colored mushrooms (such as [Chicken of the Woods](#) and [Turkey Tail](#)). With the towering canopy,



[Pileated Woodpeckers](#) aren't an uncommon sight.



More information at stolaf.edu/naturallands

Top Picture: Chicken of the Woods (Olivia Hebblewhite)

