

 **Dominating Flora at the St. Joseph** 
 **County Conservation & Sportsman Club Inc** 
23640 Featherstone Rd, Sturgis, MI 49091

*~Brought to you by efforts of **Troop 402** from Sturgis, Michigan~*

Sassafras



Sassafras grows up to 110 feet tall (35 meters). Characterized by slender branches with orange, brown to yellow bark, with yellow flowers. The leaves are mitten shaped and smell citrusy when crushed. Sassafras grows in more open woods. Little known fact: sassafras powder, called file (fee-lay), is used in creole food like gumbo. Butterfly caterpillars and deer like to eat its leaves. In winter, rabbits consider Sassafras bark a delicious treat.

Burr Oak



Burr Oak, with a lifespan of 200-300 years with some living up to 400, grows approximately 1 foot per year. These trees grow up to 80 feet tall with a width of 40-60 feet. It does not produce its first acorns until 35 years of age.

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Autumn Olive



The Autumn Olive bears fruit in 3 years of growth. It prefers a dry, well-lit environment. Transported from Asia in the 1800s, it does not naturally occur in the United States, but was used in the 1950s to combat erosion. The fruits of the autumn olive can be eaten, or made into jam. The fruit comes in red berries with silver scales, leading it to be called silverberry. Although it is prevalent in this environment, it harms native plants by changing the chemistry of the soil and shading out surrounding trees.

Oriental Bittersweet



The Oriental Bittersweet is a woody vine native to China (also found in Japan and Korea). This makes it an invasive species to the local area. It thrives in most environments. Often the Bittersweet strangles and restricts plant's water and sun access. Some Bittersweet was removed from this environment during the creation of this trail, but the problem remains. Seeds are spread far and wide by birds; an unstoppable force.