

# Michigan Nature Association

## Sharon Zahrfeld Memorial Nature Sanctuary



### Sanctuary at a Glance:

**Location:** Genesee County

**Size:** 35.5 acres

**History:** MNA acquired the land in 1997.

### About MNA:

The Michigan Nature Association is a nonprofit conservation organization working to protect Michigan's rare, threatened and endangered species by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

Established in 1952, MNA's members, donors, and volunteers have built a remarkable network of more than 170 nature sanctuaries across the state – the largest network of natural areas established and maintained by a nonprofit conservation organization in Michigan.



### Michigan Nature Association

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Photo: Jeremy Emmi

MNA originally purchased a 55-acre parcel here in 1997. The land was later split into five smaller parcels, one of which was retained by MNA. The lower habitat quality parcels were sold off. The sanctuary was initially named Save-It-Creek Nature Sanctuary, referring to the creek running through the sanctuary. In 2012 the sanctuary was renamed after long-time volunteer and MNA member, Sharon Zahrfeld who had lived nearby.

Sharon's husband, Ted, described Sharon's life as a covenant of service to family, church, community and nature. Sharon was a youth minister, engaged couples counselor, liturgical environmental artist, office manager, art gallery owner, and MNA and library volunteer. Sharon and Ted Zahrfeld were married for 49 years, and raised one son together.

Sharon Zahrfeld Memorial Nature Sanctuary is made up of gently rolling hills, with an elevation reaching approximately 30 feet above the creek bed. Lower portions of the sanctuary are seasonally wet and include ephemeral ponds and the "Save It Creek". The sanctuary is in the Shiawassee River watershed, with the creek eventually converging with the Shiawassee River and eventually the Saginaw River. The southern half of the Shiawassee River basin, where the sanctuary is located, consists of alternating east-west fine or medium-textured ground moraines, till plains and outwash plains.



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## Wetlands Attract Wildlife

The seasonal variation of the creek's water level plays a vital role in the southern floodplain forest community. The sanctuary's several wetlands make it an attractive spot for songbirds and other wildlife.

## Diverse Wildflower Display

Skunk cabbage, scarlet oak and the Michigan lily are a few of the species that call Sharon Zahrfeld Memorial Nature Sanctuary home. Spring visitors are greeted with a diverse wildflower display, including beautiful marsh marigolds.



Photo: Scappaticci Family



Photo: Kernie King

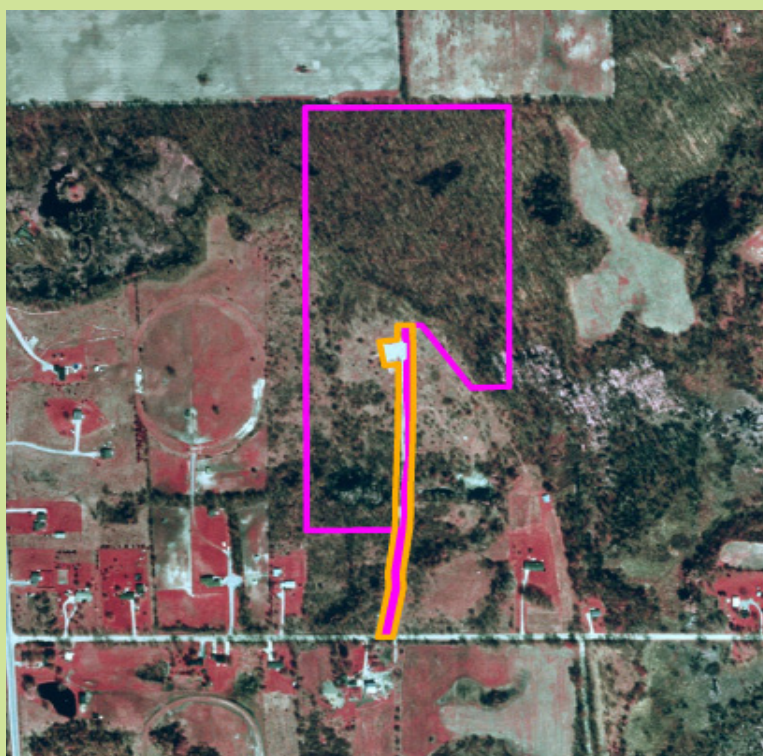
## Planning Your Visit:

This sanctuary is class "A", so it is open to the public during daylight hours. There is a nature trail that runs through the sanctuary, giving visitors spectacular views of the forest and creek. In the spring, visitors can see beautiful, various wildflower displays in the sanctuary.

Visitors can park in the gravel loop at the trailhead.

## How to Get There:

The sanctuary is located in Genesee County near Linden on the north side of Rolston Road, just east of Seymour Road.



Sanctuary Map