

Weekend Weather

Friday

Partly Cloudy

High: 79°

Low: 62°



Saturday

Partly Cloudy

High: 84°

Low: 62°



Sunday

AM Showers

High: 70°

Low: 53°



Beyond the Gates – Antrim Creek Natural Area

Next up for the Beyond the Gates, we are going to drive about 15 minutes south of Charlevoix, towards Traverse City to a beach called Antrim Creek Natural Area. [Antrim Creek Natural Area \(antrimcounty.org\)](http://antrimcounty.org)

Our family discovered this place when we kept our dogs at a kennel on Barnard Road a few years ago. Antrim Beach is part of a land conservation that was given to the state and includes about 150 acres. The beauty of Antrim Beach is that you don't see any houses, docks, giant yellow floating trampolines, or much of anything. To get there, drive south on Highway 31 until you get to the town of Atwood and then turn right on Rex Beach Road. Take Rex Beach Road to the end and then follow the small access road to the parking area at the bottom. Note that the access road is only wide enough for one car so be on the lookout. The conservation land goes probably a quarter of a mile in each direction. The swimming is nice there in a sandy, crescent shaped beach and there is good stone hunting there. My sister, Varina, collected enough oval, smooth, black stones to tile the floor of an outdoor shower back in Nashville. I have seen bald eagles there almost every time. There is a 2-mile hiking trail through the woods around the entire property. There are stories of the original owners driving an old Scout SUV down the beach while pulling people on waterskis behind the car (Was that you, Chris Payne?). The afternoons on weekends do get a little busy, so I suggest going during the week.

On the return trip, take Old Dixie Highway and drive through the charming, tiny town of Norwood which will connect you back to Highway 31 via Norwood Road.

Best,
Frazer Buntin

