Caldwell Woods is named for Billy Caldwell, chief of the Potawatomi Indians and instrumental in Chicago's early history for saving the lives of the Kinzie family at the Fort Dearborn Massacre. As reward for his service, the United States government in 1816 granted him the lands along the North Branch of the Chicago River north of the Indian Boundary line. The Indian Boundary line represents the lands the United States took control removing native American settlements in order to build a navigation canal to connect Lake Michigan with the Illinois River.

These woods given to Caldwell occupy both sides of the North Branch of the Chicago River within the Forest Glen community. Its southeasterly boundary is the Indian Boundary line (Rogers and Forest Glen Avenues), and its northern boundary is Central and Caldwell Avenues. The woods today consists of mostly of forested wetlands and bottomlands, and represent some of the best natural habitat on the Chicago River. Visitors to the woods in the spring will see a great abundance of spring ephemerals that include spring beauties, may apples, swamp buttercup, trout lilies, and wild geranium. Caldwell Woods is a popular bird observation location for migratory songbirds, especially warblers, thrushes and vireos. The secluded woodland cover also provides habitat for Cooper's hawks.

A picnic grove is located on Forest Glen Avenue that provides parking and access to unimproved hiking trails that follow the winding course of the river and flatlands. These trails connect to with Indian Boundary Woods and LaBagh Woods. The 9-hole Billy Caldwell Golf Course is located within the center of the woodland area. BILLY CALDWELL AND FOREST GLEN WOODS FOREST PRESERVE

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