

Welcome to the DUNDAS VALLEY

The Dundas Valley is one of Southern Ontario's most spectacular natural areas. Highlights of the 1200-hectare conservation area include lush forests, colourful meadows, cold water streams, stunning geological formations and an array of rare plants, birds and wildlife. The area is part of a large glacial valley that spreads out into Lake Ontario.

The Dundas Valley is as rare and unique as any protected area in the world, but it is not in the middle of the wilderness; it is the heart of the Canada's 10th largest city. It is eight times larger than New York's Central Park! The geographical area of the Valley is more than 6,000 acres (2,700ha), including Spencer Gorge and the Escarpment rim in Ancaster, Dundas, and Flamborough. Today, the Hamilton Conservation Authority protects 3,000 of those acres (1,200 hectares), thanks largely to the efforts of concerned citizens.

Trail Centre

A replica of a Victorian train station, the Dundas Valley Trail Centre is the hub of the Valley's trail network. The Centre has a food concession, washrooms, interpretive displays, brochures and maps detailing the Dundas Valley.



Picnicking

The Stacey Meadow Pavilion can accommodate up to 80 people. Its pond side location and lookout, which extends out into the water makes it a lovely spot for group picnics and weddings. The Dundas Valley also offers open meadow areas with picnic tables and the Trail Centre's attached pavilion is available for group rentals by special arrangement.

SHARE THE TRAIL

The trail system is open to hikers, dog-walkers, joggers, cyclists, equestrians and cross-country skiers. Enjoyment and safety among such a diverse group begins with every individual.

Being cautious and courteous helps ensure a great trail experience for everyone.

Note: Because of rugged terrain, Dundas Valley trails have limited accessibility. Wheelchair and scooter users are encouraged to use the Rail Trail.



HCA Trail Etiquette

- Stay on marked designated trails. There are many rare and sensitive plants that can be easily damaged or destroyed.
- Respect and share the trail with other users.
- Watch for and obey all trail closure signs.
- Respect neighbouring landowners by staying off private property, maintaining privacy for landowners and avoiding excessive noise.
- Bicycles are not permitted on the Bruce Trail
- Alcohol is not permitted at any time.
- Pack out what you pack in. Please leave our natural areas clean.
- The Niagara Escarpment is full of wonders and can also be dangerous. To enjoy this area safely, please stay on marked trails and behind all fences and barriers. Keep children within arm's reach and away from cliff and escarpment edges.

PETS

All dogs in the Dundas Valley Conservation Area MUST be on a leash at all times.

Conservation Authority regulations require dogs to be on leash, for the safety of the wildlife of the area, and also for the safety of school groups that are in the Dundas Valley for Environmental Education programs.

Remove dog waste from the trail and dispose of it in the garbage.



LOCATION AND CONTACTS

Dundas Valley Conservation Area  
650 Governor's Road, Dundas, Ontario L9H 5E3  
905-627-1233  
dvalley@conservationhamilton.ca

On your way out today use your receipt towards the purchase of a Hamilton Conservation Authority Membership Pass. The pass is good for 12 consecutive months and entitles entry into HCA parks. Purchase your pass at the gatehouse or the Trail Centre.



Entrance fees are collected at the gate. A fee schedule is posted at the entrance or visit: [www.conservationhamilton.ca](http://www.conservationhamilton.ca)

For the latest event listings, outdoor guides and more, visit our website at: [www.conservationhamilton.ca](http://www.conservationhamilton.ca)



DUNDAS VALLEY



THE TRAIL SYSTEM

A 40 kilometre trail system developed and maintained by HCA and sections of the world famous Bruce Trail, provide access to almost every part of the Dundas Valley. The trail network is organized around three major trails: The Main Loop Trail, The Bruce Trail, and the 32 kilometre Hamilton to Brantford Rail Trail.

Bruce Trail

A section of the Bruce Trail travels through the Dundas Valley. Canada's oldest and longest marked footpath, it spans more than 885 km of mail trail and 400 km of associated side trails. No cycling is permitted on the Bruce Trail. For more information, visit:

[brucetrail.org](http://brucetrail.org)

Hamilton to Brantford Rail Trail

Canada's first inter-urban trail, and one of the region's most important walking, cycling and equestrian routes as part of the Trans Canada Trail. Links to Paris and Cambridge extend the Trail to 80 kilometres.

Main Loop - 3.4 km loop

The Main Loop Trail is a journey through a mature deciduous forest, hemlock groves, stream valleys, an old apple orchard and open meadow. Points of interest also include the Trail Centre, Hermitage Ruins, Sulphur Spring and Hermitage Cascade. Allow 90 minutes

Monarch Trail - 5.1 km one way

Branching off the Main Loop Trail at the top of the Merrick orchard, this trail leads through mature deciduous forests, meadows, and rolling hills. The top of Groundhog Hill provides a panoramic view of the Valley. Allow 3.5 hours



McCormack Trail – 7.5 km one way

Heads north from the Trail Centre through reforested areas and meadows among the rolling hills of the valley. The trails continues northward to join the Bruce Trail, and after crossing Governor's Road wanders through pasture lands and woodlots. This trail offers magnificent views of the Escarpment, town of Dundas, City of Hamilton and Lake Ontario. Allow 2.5 hours

Headwaters Trail – 10.5 km

The largest section of trail in the Dundas Valley, the trail leaves the Main Loop Trail between the Gatehouse Museum parking lot and Hermitage Ruins. Along the way, you will pass the historic Griffin House Museum, rolling hills, forests, meadows, deeply cut valleys and sparkling streams. Crossing Martin Road, the trail leads through a pine plantation and a mature deciduous forest to Paddy Green Road where the trail loops. Allow 4.5 hours

Spring Creek Trail – 3.3 km one way

Beginning at the Trail Centre, this trail crosses Sanctuary Park before ending in the town of Dundas at Warren Park. Allow 90 minutes.

Heritage Trail – 1.8 km one way

Leads from the Main Loop Trail to Ontario Street in Ancaster. Passing through lush mixed forests and climbing through the Niagara Escarpment, this trail was once used by early settlers as an alternate transportation route in the spring when wet and muddy conditions rendered Sulphur Springs Road impassable. It is also thought that nomadic aboriginals used this route as part of their network of trails. Allow 60 minutes.

Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere

The Niagara Escarpment is an internationally recognized landform and is the cornerstone of Ontario's Greenbelt. A landscape of rich biodiversity, home to hundreds of Ontario's Species at Risk, vital watersheds, agricultural areas and 450 million year old geological history. Designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Niagara Escarpment is a treasure to protect for future generations.

Carolinian Forest

The Dundas Valley is part of a once vast and untouched deciduous forest stretching from Southern Ontario to the Carolinas, known as the Carolinian Forest. This Carolinian Forest can be found nowhere else in Canada. This area accounts for only one percent of Canada's geographical area, but is home to 25 percent of Canada's population, and home to one-third of Canada's endangered species. The Dundas Valley is one of 10 nodal parks along the Escarpment, and is home to 585 species of plants and animals, 55 of which are rare or endangered.



The Hermitage and Gatehouse Museum

The Hermitage, located just off the Main Loop Trail, is a popular spot to visit while in the area. The ruins are a beautiful and picturesque place to stop while on a hike. The ruins were restored and reopened to the public in the summer of 2016. The Hermitage can be used for wedding ceremonies.

Griffin House

An excellent example of Ancaster's early history is preserved in a simple 1.5-storey house just west of the Hermitage Ruins. Eneral's Griffin and his wife, Priscilla moved to the area in 1829 to escape slavery in the United States, possibly making use of the Underground Railroad. Group tours and themed hikes are organized by the Fieldcote Museum.

Bruce Duncan Teaching Garden

The Bruce Duncan Wildlife Teaching Garden is a place where schoolchildren and visitors are able to see, touch and observe the changes over time to natural displays. The garden assists with Ontario curriculum-based outdoor environmental education programs, and are also of interest to the casual visitor. A birdblind overlooking several birdhouses allows visitors to observe the many bird species found in the Valley throughout the year. The garden is wheelchair accessible and features interpretive panels that explain what can be seen in the garden, as well as information about important natural features elsewhere in the Dundas Valley, and wildlife species that may be seen in the area.



MEMBERSHIP PASSES

The Dundas Valley Conservation Area relies entirely on donations and fees to operate. Membership passes provide funds to keep the trails open and the facilities maintained. HCA's membership passes allow year round access to HCA conservation areas and Westfield Heritage Village. Most of all, it comes with the knowledge that you are helping to support conservation in your ownbackyard.

Purchase yours today at: [www.conservationhamilton.ca](http://www.conservationhamilton.ca)





DUNDAS VALLEY TRAIL MAP



OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Dundas Valley Conservation Area is home to the Hamilton Conservation Authority's Outdoor Environmental Education Programs and has provided more than 500,000 students with the opportunity to explore and discover Hamilton's unique natural areas. HCA Outdoor Environmental Education programs encourage elementary and secondary students to get outside to experience and connect with the natural environment through hands-on, outdoor active programming. These year round programs are designed to assist students and teachers to develop sensitivity to the environment while meeting current curriculum guidelines.

For over 15 years, the Dundas Valley Conservation Area has hosted the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Envirothon, an environmental competition for high school students.

Throughout the summer, HCA also offers Eco Adventure Day Camps, introducing young adventurers to activities that will help them get excited about the great outdoors!

For more information please contact the Education Coordinator at 905-627-1233 or [hcaenvd@conservationhamilton.ca](mailto:hcaenvd@conservationhamilton.ca)



Purchase your membership pass today at [www.conservationhamilton.ca](http://www.conservationhamilton.ca)