

WELCOME TO ERAMOSA KARST!

Looking for an exciting natural adventure? Venture through our Eramosa Karst; filled with underground caves and streams, meadows, and forests. As one of the watershed’s most unique natural gems, it’s the perfect location for hiking, nature appreciation, and education.



WHAT IS A KARST?

The term “karst” comes from a Slavic word meaning barren, stony ground. It is also the name of a region in Slovenia that is well-known for sinkholes and springs.

Geologists have adopted “karst” as the term for all such terrain. The term “karst” describes the whole landscape, not just a single feature. A karst landscape most commonly develops on limestone, because limestone is a softer sedimentary rock which is easily eroded over time by water. Karsts can also develop on several other types of rock such as dolostone, gypsum, and salts.

PETS AND AREA ETIQUETTE

Pets must be kept on a leash at all times and cannot be left unattended. Remove dog waste from the trail and dispose of it in the garbage.

- Alcohol use and possession are prohibited
- Pack out what you pack in
- Do not deface, remove, disturb, or damage any property, plants, birds, or mammals

COYOTE ACTIVITY

Coyotes are commonly seen at the Eramosa Karst. It is important to stay cautious, especially during breeding and denning season, January to May. Watch children at all times, keep pets leashed, never feed wildlife, stay on trails, and do not approach coyotes.

For more information on safely coexisting with coyotes, visit: [conservationhamilton.ca/living-with-coyotes](http://conservationhamilton.ca/living-with-coyotes)

LOCATIONS, CONTACTS & HCA PASS

Eramosa Karst Conservation Area  
86 Upper Mt. Albion Rd  
Stoney Creek, Ontario L8J 0B1  
289-860-0363  
[mountain@conservationhamilton.ca](mailto:mountain@conservationhamilton.ca)



Save your receipt from today’s visit to use towards the purchase of a Hamilton Conservation Authority Membership Pass.

Enjoy year-round access to HCA areas for 12 full months.



Entrance fees are collected at the gate. A fee schedule and reservation policy are posted at the entrance.

For more information on HCA and Eramosa Karst visit: [www.conservationhamilton.ca](http://www.conservationhamilton.ca)



ERAMOSA KARST



[WWW.CONSERVATIONHAMILTON.CA](http://WWW.CONSERVATIONHAMILTON.CA)

WHAT IS AT ERAMOSA KARST

POTTRUFF HALF-BLIND VALLEY

A stream valley that ends abruptly at a stream sink is called a “blind valley”. In some cases, water can overwhelm that stream sink during excessive rainfall, forcing the stream to overflow the blind valley and carry on overland. This is what geologists refer to as a “half-blind valley”.

POTTRUFF SPRING

Pottruff Spring is an example of a resurgent spring, which means the water is re-emerging after flowing underground through caves or smaller conduits from stream sinks situated farther upstream. Pottruff Spring is fed by Stewart Creek and Phoenix Creek. The flow of water from this spring varies greatly depending on recent rainfall.



THE AMPHITHEATRE

This large semi-circular depression is affectionately called the “Amphitheatre”. This landmark has been influenced by both people and the forces of nature. The ridge of rock you see is the top of the Eramosa Escarpment. Like the Niagara Escarpment, this erosional escarpment extends east to west across the Hamilton Mountain. It varies up to 30m tall, but much of it is buried under soil. The semi-circular shape of the amphitheater the result of quarrying, as this area was a convenient place for early settlers to extract blocks of the dolostone rock to use for building barn foundations and homes.



POTTRUFF CAVE

Pottruff Cave is an example of a karst window. It was created by the collapse of its bedrock roof into the underlying cave passage. During rainfall, a stream emerges from a conduit on the southwest side of the cave and disappears down a vertical fissure on the northwest side. The water comes from the confluence of Stewart and Phoenix Creeks. Once it sinks through the fissure in the floor, it flows through underground passages until emerging at Pottruff Spring.

POTTRUFF CREEK

Pottruff Creek is fed by Phoenix Creek and Stewart Creek. It is unique because it carries water above and below ground due to several sinks along its rocky creek bed. These sinks connect to caves that run in the same direction as the creek bed. During low water conditions, all the water flow is occurring underground in the caves. After heavy rain or snowmelt, the cave system fills up, forcing water to flow down the creek bed on the surface as well as through the caves below. Whether it’s wet or dry during your visit, look closely at the creek bed to observe these interesting features- you might see Karst in action!



NEXUS CAVE & WINDOW

This cave is the largest at Eramosa Karst Conservation Area, and the tenth longest cave in Ontario. It has 344m of surveyed passage that extends to a water-filled cave called a sump. Although not passable, the underground stream continues another 320m to the north where it resurges at an inaccessible spring outside of the conservation area. The main entrance is a large fissure or grike that overlies a wider cave passage. Farther downstream, there is a second entrance called the Window, where a collapse of the roof created a small vertical opening. When flowing, the underground stream can be seen below. Inside the cave, there is a solution shaft that is 4m wide and 4m high that connects cave passages in two different layers (strata) of rock. It is one of only three solution shafts known to occur inside an Ontario cave.

OLD POTRUFF HOMESTEAD

In the 1800s, Eramosa Karst was owned by several farming families. They were the McGill, Kinney, Phoenix, Stewart, Pottruff, and Olmsted families. Many of the geological features in Eramosa Karst have been named after them. The old Pottruff homestead included a house and a barn, which are no longer visible other than some old foundations. Due to the protection that was given to this special place, these vestiges will remain the only man-made structures within the conservation area.





# ERAMOSA KARST MAP

**Area Closes at Sunset**  
**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**  
**CALL 911.**  
Know what trail you are on.

**Hamilton Conservation**  
**Authority Office Numbers**  
Business hours 905-525-2181  
After hours 905-523-8787

**Main Entrance  
& Parking Area**

Upper Mount Albion Road

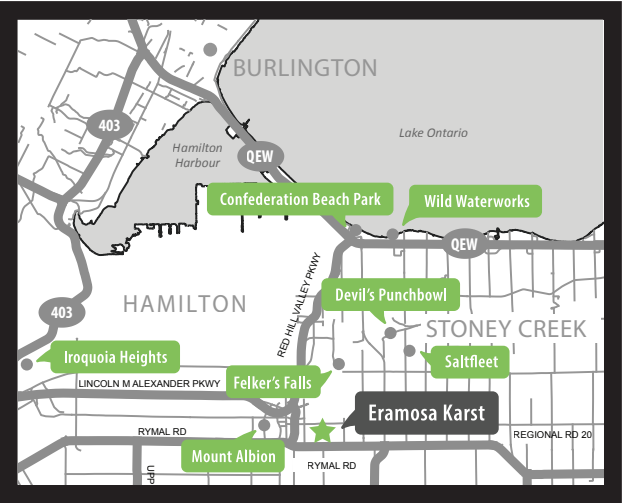
Highland Road West

Richdale Drive

Fairhaven Drive

Second Road West

Rymal Road East



0 125 m 250 m

## LEGEND

- Washrooms
- Information
- Trail Head
- Picnic Area
- Parking
- Building
- Site Feature
- Trail ID Post
- Forest
- Field
- Watercourse

## PERMITTED TRAIL USE



Pets must be on a leash at all times.

Pet waste must be picked up and thrown away in the garbage.

## TRAILS

		Trail Length	Hike Times
Karst Features Trail		2.6 km	40 minutes
Meadows Trail		1.7 km	30 minutes
Bobolink Trail		1.3 km	25 minutes
Connector Trail		See map	Varies
East Mountain Trail Loop		See City of Hamilton for more information	

Rating	Surface Type
Moderate	Gravel
Easy	Mown Grass
Easy	Mown Grass
Varies	Varies
Easy	Asphalt

## TRAIL RATING SYSTEM

- Accessible**  
Barrier free trails that are less than 2km in length and generally flat with slopes from 0% - 5%, mostly less than 3%. Hard packed, firm surfaces with no obstacles.
- Easy**  
Generally flat trails less than 5km in length with firm, stable surfaces and slopes from 0% to 5%. Some obstacles may be present. Little to no trail experience or preparation are required.
- Moderate**  
Trails less than 10km in length that may have some obstacles, short steep sections and uneven ground with slopes from 5% to 10%. Some experience and preparation is recommended.
- Difficult**  
Trails that are longer than 10km, and/or have many steep sections with slopes greater than 10%, narrow or uneven sections and obstacles. Moderate experience and preparation are highly recommended.
- Unrated**  
Trails may be unmaintained, faint or unmarked in sections with a variety of terrain to cross. Exceptional experience, navigation skills and preparation are required.