

Sterling Nature Center

Cayuga County Parks & Trails

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Sterling Preserve Trails

Meadow Loop (1) - 1.6 mile - running through meadows, this trail provides access to the birds, butterflies, dragonflies and flora of the different field ecosystems.

Bluff Trail (2) - 1.0 mile - along the top of the lake bluff and through the lakeshore woodlands, this trail features several vistas of Lake Ontario along its path.

Lake Trail (3) - 0.75 mile - loop provides a stroll along the Lake Ontario shoreline, as well as access to the shoreline from the parking lot and the Heron Trail.

Vernal Pool Trail (4) - 0.7 mile - threads through mature woods with vernal pools scattered throughout, some retaining water until midsummer. At the bottom a short spur off the main trail leads to an observation point on the edge of the 80-acre Beaver Wetland.

Two-tail Trail (5) - 0.8 mile - historic use of this area as a farm homestead has affected the ecology of its woodlands and wetland. The trail covers an abandoned farm site with orchard, evergreen plantation and old fields. Two spurs lead to the Beaver Wetland for a look into the shallow part of the wetland.

Heron Trail (6) - 0.8 mile - woodlands, meadows, beaver-created wetland, man-made wetland, vernal pools, streams and Lake Ontario are a few of the habitats along this trail. A short spur leads to the 80-acre Beaver Wetland that includes a great blue heron rookery.

Forest Ecology Trail (7) - 0.6 mile - circles through several contrasting forest types: a conifer plantation, northern hardwood sugar maple, and a beech-hemlock lowland forest on the edge of a buttonbush wetland.

Lakeview Trail (8) - 0.4 mile - follows a meandering path around the interpretive center and through native woodland, meadow, and historic formal gardens, contrasted by a section left to nature's own devices. It also includes a deck overlooking Lake Ontario.

Dogwood Extension (9) - 1.1 mile - is an old camp road that leads through the heart of the lakeshore woodlands and provides a connection to several of the other trails. It is also the only trail open to horseback riding, bicycling and in winter to snowmobiles.

Buttonbush Trail (10) - 1 mile - encircling a lake-created wetland dominated by buttonbush shrubs this trail skirts the sides of two drumlins through hemlock woodlands and traverses the wave created berm along the lakeshore.










Eagle's View Trail (11) - 0.6 mile - brings you to an eagle's view of Lake Ontario from the top of McIntyre's Bluff. The trail can be accessed from the lakeshore, Buttonbush Trail or by parking at the end of McIntyre Rd. Enjoy the view but please do not climb on the bluffs.

Trail Rules and Etiquette

- The Sterling Nature Center is open Dawn to Dusk and is a Carry-in/Carry-Out Facility
- Please stay on designated trails and respect visitors, wildlife, plants and other features.
- Dogs must be on a leash and under control.
- Wheeled vehicles are NOT allowed on the trails or off the roads within the Sterling Nature Center and snowmobiles are only allowed on the designated trail, Dogwood Extension.
- NO picking or collecting of plants, berries, flowers or other features of the site is allowed.
- NO hunting or firearms are allowed within the Sterling Preserve.
- Swimming prohibited, lifeguard not provided.
- During the snow season, all trails are open to cross country skiing, snow shoeing, and hiking.

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Legend

-  Sterling Nature Center
-  Roads
-  Trails
-  Streams
-  Wetlands
- Interpretive Center 
- Observation Deck 
- Wetland Vista 
- Parking 
- Canoe Launch 