
Bog Meadow Brook Nature Trail

The Bog Meadow Brook Nature Trail follows an old railroad bed through a beautiful natural setting featuring different types of wetlands, a lovely stream crossing, woods and a pond with observation benches. The surface is variable, from firm crushed stone for a nice distance from the Rt. 29 parking area, to wood chips after 2,200 feet and uneven railroad ties beyond. The preserve encompasses 174 acres and contains the two-mile long trail with parking areas on each end.

Directions: From Exit 14 on the Northway (I-87) head west on Union Avenue towards Saratoga Springs. At the first traffic light turn right onto Henning Road. At the intersection with Lake Avenue (Route 29) take a right. Go through the next intersection with Weibel Avenue. The trail is approximately a quarter mile beyond the traffic light and parking is on the right. There is a second parking area on Meadowbrook Rd.

Parking: There is parking for 8-10 cars in the parking area on Rt. 29, with overflow parking available on Meadowbrook Rd. There is a no designated accessible parking space but the parallel parking area has a firm and stable surface. Our formal assessment began from the Rt. 29 parking area. Access to the trail from parking was less than 50 feet.

Distance: Two miles one way.

Trailhead: Clearly marked at kiosk from parking area

Surface: Firm and stable crushed stone for the first 2,200 feet from the trailhead. There is 20 feet of loose gravel at 1,047 feet and another 15-foot section of loose gravel at 1,925 feet. The sections of loose gravel may present an obstacle for people using mobility devices. After 2,220 feet, the surface becomes soft, consisting of wood chips and native soil. At 3,369 feet from the trailhead, railroad ties cover the trail tread and some present obstacles of four inches in height.

Width: Five feet wide.

Slope: Less than 2% for entire assessed distance of 5,280 feet.



Cross slope: Majority of the trail is under 2%, except for a section of between 3 and 4% from 700 ft to 1,100 feet from the trailhead.

Features: Benches with no arms at 15 feet, 1,566 feet, 2,207 feet and 4,419 feet from the trailhead.

Cautions and Prohibitions: There is a carry in carry out policy – please remove all your trash and leave only footprints. Dogs are allowed but must be leashed and under control at all times. Please clean up after your pet. There is no cutting, digging, removing, or damaging the trees and other plant vegetation. There is no hunting, trapping, harassing, or feeding the wildlife allowed. Firearms and other weapons are not permitted. Bicycles, horses, and motorized vehicles, including snowmobiles and ATVs, are not allowed. Alcohol or illegal substances are not allowed. No camping or fires are allowed at any time.

Description: The idea for Bog Meadow Brook Trail was conceived in 1993 by the Saratoga Springs Open Space Project (now Saratoga PLAN) in collaboration with the City of Saratoga Springs.

The path travels along what was once a railroad line. Two miles of trail are surrounded by the 174 acres of Meadowbrook Preserve. The preserve contains wetlands and shaded wooded area. Within the watershed of the preserve there are maple trees, ferns, meadowsweet, and evergreens. The flat trail is covered with variable surface through the length, including firm crushed stone, wood chips, packed natural soil, old railroad ties, and a well constructed boardwalk. From the Route 29 parking area the trail heads southeast and begins with crushed stone underfoot. There are wetlands on either side, so a variety of vegetation will be visible in early spring and summer including skunk cabbage, marsh marigold, dogtooth violets, toothwort, bellwort, miterwort, nodding trillium, and more. By mid-summer there is an increasing variety of wild flowers including swamp thistle, swamp rose, elderberry, Canada lily, and fringed loosestrife. The trail has signs along the way to offer information about the flora and fauna that live in the preserve but bring a field guide for more detailed information.

There is a small stream crossing at 0.50 miles over the Bog Meadow Brook. The marshy bog comes into view shortly after the stream crossing. Beaver activity can be seen around this small pond and the trail runs adjacent to the pond for the next quarter mile. The preserve is a nice spot for birding and there are a large variety of birds that may be spotted near the bog. These include great blue and green herons, Canada geese, ring-necked ducks, and hooded mergansers. Baltimore orioles, red-

winged blackbirds, the gray catbird and song and swamp sparrows may be seen and heard along the wooded edge of the trail. The trail in this section can be a little muddy and includes some railroad ties. There are a few benches to sit and rest.

After 0.75 miles the trail leaves the primary wetlands and enters into the woods. In this section there is a sign that provides information about the former railway that passed through. The woodland here is lush with ferns and mosses. Listen here for the woodpeckers that call the preserve home. Around 1.0 mile, the trail passes along the Winding Brook housing development and meets up with a side trail at 1.5 miles that leads into the development. Deer tracks can often be seen in this section of the trail.

After passing the side trail to the housing development at 1.5 miles, the trail becomes a wide, 6-foot, well-constructed boardwalk for approximately 250 feet and spans an open marsh. There is an observation platform on the boardwalk and benches. This spot also provides a great spot to view the wetlands, birds, and other wildlife.

After crossing the boardwalk, the trail narrows to about two feet and follows a small stream. From here that trail reaches the second parking lot at Meadowbrook Road at 2.0 miles.

Owner: City of Saratoga Springs with Maintenance by Saratoga PLAN

For more information: Contact Saratoga PLAN, (518) 587-5554, info@saratogaplan.org, www.saratogaplan.org

TRAILS FOR ALL IN SARATOGA COUNTY

This trail report is part of a series of documents describing outdoor spaces with accessible features in Saratoga County. It was created by ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, a regional environmental organization. For more information, or to find more descriptions of trails for users of different ability levels, go to ecosny.org. ECOS also publishes a series of guides describing natural areas in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties.