

The Corbeil Conservation Area trail wanders its way through a mixed forest and lowland wetland. Recognizing its unique ecological features, the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority (NBMCA) purchased this property to conserve the headwaters of the La Vase River and protect the floodplain in this area. NBMCA developed this self-guided trail, leading visitors across boardwalks, a variety of landscapes and interesting rock formations that were created by glaciers during the last Ice Age. The trail also meets the historic La Vase River water system, used as a secondary water travel corridor by early European traders and explorers.

Follow the Interpretive Sites along the trail to discover the changes that take place in a forest over time. A forest is the outcome of an intricate chain of events!

As you hike these trails, may you be inspired by the words of Architect and Aviation Pioneer Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959):

“Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.”

Happy hiking!



- NOTICE**
- No alcohol consumption
 - No camping
 - No dumping
 - No excessive noise
 - No hunting
 - No motorized vehicles
 - No open fires
 - No removal of vegetation

FACILITIES & ATTRACTIONS

- Bridge/Platform
- Interpretive Sites
- Parking
- Picnic Area
- Trailhead
- Washrooms

PERMITTED USES

- Biking/Multi Use
- Hiking
- Snow-shoeing
- Scenery/Photography
- Wildlife Viewing
- Pets on Leash
- Poop and Scoop

1 Floodplain

The floodplain is a broad, flat area bordering the river. The natural area along the La Vase River acts like a giant sponge soaking up water during heavy rainfall and releasing it slowly during dry weather. The root systems of trees, shrubs and grasses help keep the soil in place allowing water to flow through it without washing away soil. By conserving these lands, we reduce the impacts of flooding and erosion.

2 Glacier Boulder

Approximately 10,000 years ago, the last glacier retreated in a north-east direction acting like a bulldozer, plowing the land and picking up rocks and other materials in its path. The rocks became rounded as the ice dragged them along. This smooth polished boulder was deposited by a glacier as it melted. It is called an erratic.

3 Pioneer Forest

Valuable Red and White Pine were logged in Corbeil 100 years ago by the Booth Lumber Company. Logging ended in 1910 when a forest fire devastated the area. The thriving pine forest was reduced to a grassy meadow and then transformed into a “pioneer forest” with Aspen and Birch trees – the first species to grow in an upland area after a forest fire. The area at this Interpretive Site is dominated by Aspen and Birch.

4 White Pine

White Pine earned its place in Ontario’s history books by becoming Ontario’s official arboreal emblem in 1984. It was an important source of income and trade, forming the basis of Ontario industry in the 1800s. White Pine trees were used in the construction of canal systems, railways and towns. At this Interpretive Site, compare the White Pine with its five-needle cluster, gray-green young bark (changing to dark grey-brown with deep furrowed ridges as they age) and the Red Pine with its two-needle cluster and reddish scaly bark.

continued

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NBMCA Conservation Areas and Trails



Explore these other fascinating Trails and Conservation Areas in your area.

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 JP Webster | 9 Shields-McLaren |
| 2 Powassan Mountain | 10 Eau Claire Gorge |
| 3 Kate Pace Way | 11 Shirley Skinner |
| 4 Laurier Woods | 12 Eva Wardlaw |
| 5 Kinsmen Trail | 13 Elks Lodge 25 Family Park |
| 6 Laurentian Escarpment | 14 Mattawa Island |
| 7 La Vase Portage | 15 Papineau Lake |
| 8 Corbeil | |

More detailed information about each Conservation Area and Trail can be found on our website

www.nbmca.ca
(705) 474-5420

Trail Interpretive Signs (continued)

5 Corbeil

Downstream, near the junction of this tributary and the La Vase River, Joseph Corbeil built a lumber mill in 1890 and called the developed area “Corbeil Siding”. The area was originally called “Grit” but as the mill’s popularity grew, the town took on the name “Corbeil” in 1892.

6 Beaver

The beavers played a key role in creating this wetland. Their dam turned a small stream into a healthy thriving wetland. Over time, the water stagnates and the wetland loses oxygen, making it difficult for plants and animals to live. When the pond becomes anoxic (no oxygen) the trees which provide food and lodging for the beaver disappear; and so does the beaver. This pond will eventually dry up but remain full of rich sediments that will support the growth of a meadow and one day a forest ecosystem.

7 Decomposition

What happens when trees fall over? They break down into small pieces, eaten by insects or falling to the ground to be absorbed by the roots of moss and other plants. One way or another, they return to the soil to support the growth of more trees.

8 Succession

As evergreens grow, they shade out other pioneer forest species and become dominant. Their dominance is only temporary because their seeds cannot germinate in their own shade or in the organic litter on the forest floor. Seeds of hardwoods such as maples and oaks can germinate and grow in the shade of evergreens. As the evergreens die, hardwood seedlings grow quickly to fill the forest canopy. This change in natural communities is called succession.



9 Soil

Can rocks turn into soil? Yes, it’s true! It all begins when heat and/or cold create cracks in rocks. Lichens, the plants that look like mold or stain on the rocks, colonize those cracks. The mosses and lichens break down the rock and decompose, forming soil that gives new life to other plants.

10 Batholith

Here you stand on the edge of the Bonfield Batholith! Millions of years ago, large irregular masses of igneous rock melted or forced its way into existing layers of rock, forming an oval or shield-shaped ridge called batholith. The Bonfield Batholith extends across the central portion of the conservation area then proceeds east into Bonfield and Boulter Townships.

11 La Vase River

This last Interpretive Site brings us back to the La Vase River. The slow-moving, gently sloping watercourse is an example of a mature river. Swift flowing streams full of rapids and waterfalls go through many changes until they reach the maturity of “old age”: sluggish, winding and full of sediment, often forming a delta at its mouth. La Vase River meanders its way through the northern part of the Conservation Area and flows west through the City of North Bay and into Lake Nipissing.

We hope you’ve enjoyed your trail hike and developed an appreciation of forest ecology in our watershed. Conservation today ensures an active forest community for tomorrow. It’s up to us!



Corbeil Conservation Area Interpretive Trails



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