

## Hendrie Valley



Part of the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve  
Links to the Bruce and Waterfront trails



### Hours

- RBG Centre – 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., late April to Thanksgiving; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thanksgiving to late April (680 Plains Rd.)
- Trailheads – dawn to dusk. Metered parking at trailhead lots. Parking is free to RBG members (display Parking Pass).
- Arboretum – 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; regular admission fees apply during spring bloom festivals and open hours may be extended.

### Membership – Passport to Paradise

Membership is one of many ways to support RBG's sanctuaries. Nearly half of the operational funding of the Gardens is raised through memberships, donations and admissions. How much is a nature sanctuary in your backyard worth to you? Purchase your membership today and receive free parking at our trail heads.

Charitable registration #133500850 RR 0001  
A private landowning agency providing public access to the environment.

RBG Centre, 680 Plains Road West  
Burlington, ON L7T 4H4  
905-527-1158 • [www.rbg.ca](http://www.rbg.ca)

ALSO IN THIS 2021  
MAP SERIES:  
• Cootes Paradise  
• Escarpment Properties

## Hendrie Valley Sanctuary

This 100-hectare sanctuary is centred on the Grindstone Creek Valley. The area features forested slopes with towering trees, a 60-hectare river-mouth marsh complex and four creeks. Transferred to RBG in 1941 for ecological protection, it stretches to Carroll's Point in Hamilton Harbour, and contains an extensive collection of floodplain wetlands.

### MAJOR ACCESS POINTS

**RBG Centre** — RBG Centre is our administrative hub. It features an interactive orientation exhibit and our winter exhibition, plant displays including the children's Natural Playground, Mediterranean Garden, café, and gift shop.

**Cherry Hill Gate** — This barrier-free access route leads to the Gardens' signature boardwalk perched two metres above the floodplain of Grindstone Creek. This trail links Hendrie Park and Laking Garden and provides spectacular views of the valley.

**Valley Inn and Laking Garden** — At the mouth of Grindstone Creek on Spring Gardens Road, this access point is beside Laking Garden and at the lower end of the Grindstone Marshes Trail. Wetland restoration dominates the area with many projects underway. Laking Garden's feature collections include irises, peonies and a heritage garden.



**What's in a Name?** — William Hendrie, a Scottish immigrant, purchased land here in the 1870s for his racehorse farm. In 1931 his son George donated the property to Hamilton Parks Board as a memorial to William and his brothers. Ten years later the property became part of RBG.

**Early Residents** — A number of Native American footpaths and water routes converged in Hendrie Valley and served as links between Burlington Bay and the Iroquois villages on the Escarpment. The United Empire Loyalists arrived in the 1790s and expanded these transportation routes into Old Guelph Road and Snake Road. The Desjardins Canal also passed through Valley Inn, as did the original route for Highway 2.

**Vegetation and Microclimate** — Nestled between the Niagara Escarpment and Lake Ontario, the area's flora is characteristic of the more southern deciduous forest region. Soils differ on each side of the valley, resulting in differences in their plant communities, but oaks, hickories and Black Cherry are abundant.

**Habitat Restoration** — At the inception of Project Paradise in the 1990s practically the entire marshland complex had been destroyed by carp, leaving it a series of shallow muddy ponds. Various small carp barriers and artificially constructed river banks now restrict these invaders, allowing nature to successfully restore the area to a marshland.

## Trail Destinations (See map)

- 1 **South Pasture Swamp** — An oasis for endangered species, this spring-fed oxbow pond is home to beaver, muskrat, Virginia rail and wood duck. Work to restore this site began in 1994 as part of Project Paradise.
- 2 **Grindstone Creek** — With three pedestrian bridge crossings and a creek-side trail, the valley provides an intimate connection with the creek. Seasonal fish spawning runs include herring and spottail shiner in the spring and salmon in the fall.
- 3 **Snowberry Island** — Halfway along the Grindstone Marshes Boardwalk, Snowberry Island sits five metres high in the floodplain. Named after a species of plant that grows there, the island is a block of uneroded creek valley soil called a knoll.
- 4 **Grindstone Creek Delta** — Located at Valley Inn trailhead, it's both the site of an ambitious restoration project and stop-over point for migratory waterfowl. More than 100,000 Christmas trees form the foundation for the restored river banks of Grindstone Creek — these protect the marsh areas by preventing carp from entering.
- 5 **Valley Inn Hotel** — Built in 1820s on the eastern shore of Burlington Heights and standing until 1959, the hotel was a rest spot at the crossroads of the former Desjardins Canal and Hwy 2. The routes are now severed by the rail line and Hwy 403, but a section of road remains on the Grindstone Marshes Trail.

## Valley Flowers



### Skunk Cabbage

(*Symplocarpus foetidus*)

The first native flower of spring, it appears in March. Found in wet seeps and around wetlands, its flowers can generate heat; their colour and warmth attract beetle and fly pollinators.



### Early Saxifrage

(*Saxifraga virginiensis*)

Look for this small spring-flowering species along trail-side slopes. It has clusters of terminal white flowers with small egg-shaped leaves at the base of the plant.



### White Waterlily

(*Nymphaea odorata*)

This fragrant flower and wetland icon has returned to the valley ponds. Its revitalization is a result of our wetland restoration program, Project Paradise. It's also a PlantWatch species.



### Blue-stemmed Goldenrod

(*Solidago caesia*)

A late-summer flowering forest plant, named for its bluish stem. This two-foot tall goldenrod is one of eight species of goldenrod found on the property.



## Royal Botanical Gardens

### Mission

We dedicate our expertise in horticulture, conservation, science and education to connect people, plants and place for the purpose of nurturing and preserving healthy growing life on our planet.

### Canada's Biodiversity Hot Spot

Royal Botanical Gardens' 1,100 hectares is dominated by nature sanctuaries enveloping the western end of Lake Ontario. These form a Nodal Park within the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO) and the heart of the Cootes to Escarpment Ecopark System. With more than 750 native plant species, 277 types of migratory birds, 37 mammal species, 14 reptile species, 9 amphibian species and 68 species of Lake Ontario fish, the area is an important contributor to ecosystems that span international borders.

## Trail Conditions

The 27 kilometres of trail includes packed earth, crushed stone, asphalt and boardwalks; some sections are steep and hilly. Trails are not plowed or sandy during the winter. During spring thaws and after rains earthen trails become muddy. Please take appropriate caution.

**LIABILITY** RBG assumes no responsibility for loss of or damage to property, personal injury or mishap. All activities are at the risk of the participant. Our parking lots are not monitored. Do not leave any valuables in your car.

## Volunteer

Volunteers help us on our trails and in our natural lands in a wide variety of ways. If you're interested in learning more about our conservation, trail ambassadors, TrailWatchers or bird census teams, we'd love to hear from you. [rbg.ca/volunteer](http://rbg.ca/volunteer)

**PlantWatch** Join a national volunteer effort to help monitor our changing climate. The PlantWatch program enables *citizen scientists* to get involved by recording flowering times and reporting these dates to researchers. [plantwatch.ca](http://plantwatch.ca)

## Learn More

Guided educational outings are offered year-round and include everything from wildflower walks to birdwatching and photography workshops. External groups **charging** for independently guided tours must register with RBG and are subject to our self-guided admission rate. For information call 905-527-1158, ext. 270.

# Hendrie Valley Trails

4.5 km of trail, 5 lookouts  
2 boardwalks, 5 creek crossings

- Grindstone Marshes Trail: **1.6 km**, boardwalk, hilly, gravel
- Bridle Trail Loop: **1.2 km**, hilly, packed earth
- Creek Side Walk: **1.1 km**, flat, packed earth
- Kicking Horse Trail: **0.3 km**, hilly, gravel
- Snake Road Link: **0.3 km**, hilly, gravel



Royal Botanical Gardens is within the Traditional Territories of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Huron-Wendat Nations, on land covered by a Treaty between the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Crown.

*Les Jardins botaniques royaux se trouvent à l'intérieur des territoires traditionnels des nations Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe et Huronne-Wendat, sur des terres couvertes par un traité entre la Première Nation des Mississaugas de Credit et la Couronne.*

## MAP KEY LÉGENDE

- RBG Properties  
*Propriétés des JBR*
- Roads Routes
- Rail Lines  
*Voies ferrées*
- Gravel or Paved Trails  
*Sentiers en gravier ou revêtus*
- Dirt Trails  
*Sentiers en terre battue*
- Boardwalks  
*Promenades de bois*

- Washrooms  
*Toilettes*
- Wheelchair Access  
*Accès en fauteuil roulant*
- Café
- Parking  
*Stationnement*
- Pay and Display Parking  
*Stationnement payer et afficher*  
(gratuit pour les membres des JBR qui affichent leur laissez-passer en règle)

- Trailhead  
*Début de sentier*
- Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail  
*Sentier du bord du lac Ontario*
- Lookout  
*Belvédère*
- Canoe Launch  
*Mise à l'eau des canots*

## Trail Code

These lands are part of Canada's biodiversity hot spot, open to **passive recreation** – leave only footprints, take only pictures. Garbage receptacles located at trailheads. Restrictions (per RBG's bylaws):

- Pets must remain leashed at all times
- Running/jogging and cycling are not permitted
- Motorized vehicles are not permitted
- Feeding the wildlife is not permitted
- Smoking is not permitted

## Special Protection Areas

Though the property spans more than 1,100 hectares, urban encroachment has left few true sanctuaries for sensitive species. To ensure that all species have an opportunity to thrive, 20 per cent of the property is set aside as Special Protection Areas (SPA) closed to the public. There are observation points and interpretive signage adjacent to the SPAs to help visitors understand the significance of these unique spaces.

