

Nature Trail User's Etiquette

Trail User's Code

Upon entering the nature trails you are **making a pledge** to respect the environment and fellow visitors. These lands are Canada's biodiversity hotspot, set aside at the head of Lake Ontario for environmental protection, open for environmental education and passive recreation only. While walking our trails, it is important to remember that you are a visitor in someone else's home, and that your impact will be multiplied over by 200,000 other visitors. Environmental protection bylaws are posted at each trailhead. Please follow them and play a role in protecting and restoring the area for future generations.

Special Protection Areas

While the property spans 900 hectares, urban encroachment has left few true sanctuary areas for sensitive wildlife and bird species. To ensure that all species have an opportunity to persist 20 percent of the property remains without trails. For the visitor, next to these areas there are observation points and interpretive signage to help you appreciate the significance of these unique spaces.

Liability Statement

Royal Botanical Gardens assumes no responsibility for loss of, or damage to property, personal injury or mishap, all activities are at the risk of the participant. Trail structures and adjacent trees are inspected regularly for visitor safety. Parking lots are not monitored, please do not leave any valuables in your car.

Trail Use Bylaw Restrictions

1. Runners are not permitted
2. Pets must remain leashed at all times. Please clean up after your dogs and leave waste trailhead garbage receptacle.
3. Bicycles are prohibited.
4. Motorized vehicles are prohibited.
5. Horseback riding is prohibited.
6. Picking or collecting plants or wildlife is prohibited.
7. Feeding the wildlife/birds is not permitted.
8. Cross-country skiing is prohibited due to the hilly topography.
9. Ice skating is restricted to Cootes Paradise in the area adjacent to Princess Point.

Trail Conditions

The 5 main trailheads provide access to a combination of wider walking trails and narrow earthen backwoods footpaths. Surfaces include packed earth, crushed stone, asphalt and boardwalks; many sections are steep and hilly. **Ice** builds up on hills and floodplains during winter and can make trails slippery, "icers" are recommended. During spring thaws and after rains earthen trails become **muddy**.

For Those Afloat

Experience the area by canoe or kayak on your own, or as part of our organized canoe tours. Princess Point is the best place from which to launch your craft. Please remember that paddling is prohibited in posted areas during the nesting season (May and June) to protect vulnerable wildlife. Motorized boats are prohibited at all times, excluding for Gardens' research purposes.

Garden Admission fees do not apply to trail users unless there is a special event occurring at the location. Trail users arriving by car are required to pay for parking by using the parking meters available at all trailhead parking lots. Alternatively, day parking passes or memberships can be purchased from any kiosk. Proceeds from the parking fees go directly toward the maintenance of these lots as well as stewardship of the natural areas.

Thank you for supporting the Royal Botanical Gardens environmental protection lands.