

CRAWFORD LAKE

TRAIL AND VILLAGE GUIDE



PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FROM LAKE TO ESCARPMENT

Welcome

.....to Crawford Lake

The Crawford Lake Conservation Area is a natural environment park that is managed by Conservation Halton. The 468 hectare park includes unique geological features, extensive forests, a rare meromictic lake and a 15th century reconstructed Iroquoian village. The conservation area has significant natural habitat with a wide diversity of flora and fauna and approximately 19 km of nature trails.

Geology & the Niagara Escarpment

Crawford Lake is located on the Niagara Escarpment, Southern Ontario's most significant landform which winds 725 km from Queenston to the islands off the Bruce Peninsula. In Ontario, the Niagara Escarpment has more than 100 sites of geological significance including some of the best exposures of rocks and fossils of the Paleozoic Era (235-570 million years ago), to be found anywhere in the world. Many interesting geological features occur at or near the Crawford Lake Conservation Area. A large island of bedrock (Milton Outlier) that was separated from the main escarpment includes well known landmarks such as Rattlesnake Point, Kelso Heights and the Nassagaweya Canyon.

Crawford Lake, A Time Capsule of Natural and Cultural History

Crawford Lake is a rare meromictic lake that contains information about the natural and cultural history of the area. Located atop the Niagara Escarpment, this small deep body of water has limited circulation and little oxygen below 15 metres (total depth of 24 metres). This ensures the preservation of annual deposits of sediment called varves. Similar to counting growth rings on a tree, these doubled layered bands can be accurately dated. Studies of the sediment led to the discovery of the nearby Iroquoian village.

Life on the Limestone Landscape

The extensive forests and escarpment cliffs at Crawford Lake provide habitat for a wide diversity of flora and fauna. The shallow calcium rich soil and rocky outcrops sustain many unique plants (eg., the maidenhair spleenwort and walking fern, the carnivorous sundew and the exquisite yellow lady's slipper). Warblers and woodpeckers abound while Turkey Vultures can be seen soaring through the Nassagaweya Canyon. White tailed deer, raccoons, chipmunks and red squirrels are some of the common mammals found at Crawford Lake.

Support Conservation!

Visit the Crawford Lake Gift Shop!

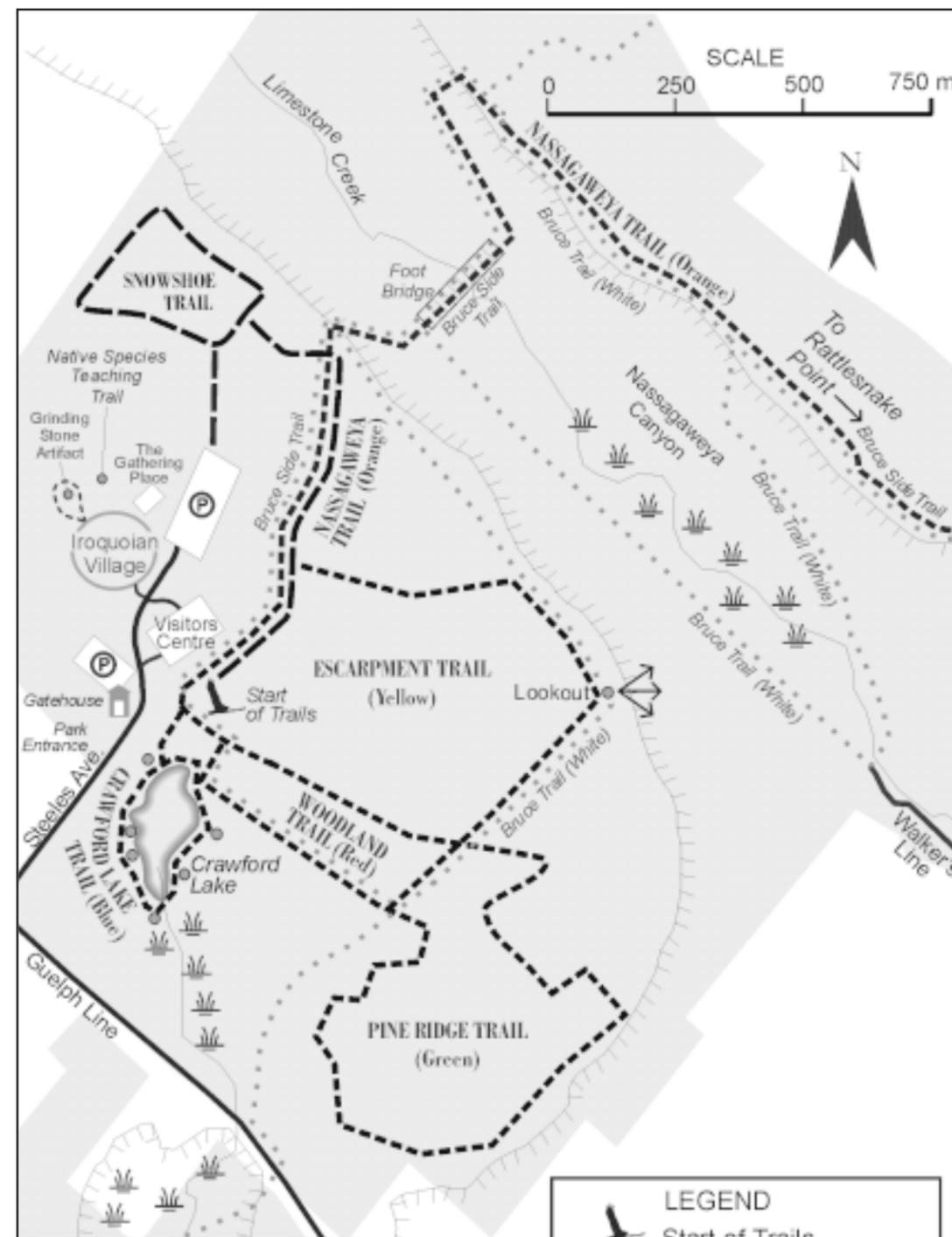
Visit our unique gift shop and take home a reminder of your visit to Crawford Lake.

- Native Crafts
- Birdfeeders and Guidebooks
- Garden Ornaments
- Jewellery
- Cozy Candles
- and much more!



Crawford Lake Trails

Crawford Lake has approximately 19 km of colour coded trails consisting of a series of overlapping loops and a connecting trail to the Rattlesnake Point Conservation Area. Interpretive stations are located on the boardwalk surrounding Crawford Lake and at the Niagara Escarpment Lookout.



LEGEND

- Start of Trails
- Area Trails
- Snowshoe Trail
- Bruce and Side Trails
- Niagara Escarpment
- Marsh
- Parking
- Interpretive Stations

Please help protect this sensitive area by following our trail regulations.

Trail Regulations

- No bicycles on trails.
- No fishing, swimming or boating.
- Dogs must be kept on leash and out of lake.
- Stay on marked trails (caution - poison ivy!)
- Refrain from walking on cross-country ski tracks.
- Take only photos and walk softly on the earth.
- Horseback riding by permit only.

Thank you.

Note: Trail distances are measured from the start of trails and are estimates only.

BLUE

Crawford Lake Trail **1.4 km (30 minutes)**

This elevated boardwalk around Crawford Lake surrounds the environmentally sensitive shoreline and forest. The boardwalk offers several interpretive stations explaining the formation of the lake and its colourful natural and human history.

RED

Woodland Trail **1.5 km (45 minutes)**

A hard-packed trail that easily accesses a cross-section of escarpment features including Crawford Lake's scenic woods and wetlands. Participate in a self-guided "Moccasin Walk" as you enjoy the inspirational signs posted along the way.

GREEN

Pine Ridge Trail **3.6 km (1 hour 30 minutes)**

This natural earthen trail takes you through rolling woodlands, pine plantations and open meadows. A wide panoramic view of surrounding escarpment lands can be seen from atop a massive glacial ridge. This trail is a loop that begins and ends on the Woodland Trail.

YELLOW

Escarpment Trail **2.4 km (1 hour)**

This natural trail winds through rocky woodlands and along the brow of the Niagara Escarpment. A highlight is the lookout where interpretive cairns and resting benches are located.

ORANGE

Nassagaweya Trail (NOT A LOOP) (to Rattlesnake Point C.A.) **7.2 km (approximately 2 hours one way)**

This natural earthen trail crosses the Nassagaweya Canyon and follows the escarpment brow to the Rattlesnake Point Conservation Area where several excellent lookouts are located. About 4-5 hours is required to complete a return trip on this trail.

Snowshoe Trail **3.4 km (1 hour 30 minutes)**

This trail has been designed with snowshoers in mind. Enjoy the beauty of winter as you wind your way through field and forest.

Bruce Trail's Main Route **725 km**

This well known Ontario hiking trail follows the Niagara Escarpment from Georgian Bay to the Niagara River. It passes through Crawford Lake Conservation Area where the main trail is marked by white painted blazes on trees and secondary access trails are blazed in blue.

Conservation Halton is a community based environmental agency that protects local ecosystems and contributes to the quality of life in communities throughout its area of jurisdiction known as the watershed. The Crawford Lake Conservation Area is part of more than 9000 acres of conservation lands that are being protected and are available for recreational and educational experiences.

Conservation Halton

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Step Back In Time – Village Guide

This 15th century Iroquoian Village was re-constructed on its original site to create a unique opportunity to expand our understanding and appreciation of Ontario's First Peoples. Three sources of information were used in reconstructing the village.

1. Archaeological research determined the exact location of various structures such as longhouse posts and fire pits.
2. Written records from the Jesuit missionaries & early explorers provided some details on the above ground features such as the longhouses, palisade walls, & other village structures.
3. Aspects of the traditional Iroquoian lifestyle have been shared with us through the oral traditions and cultural practices of the First Nations communities & Elders still honouring these traditions today.

To help you explore and enjoy the village, we encourage you to read the Silent Waters information signs located throughout the village.

Three Sisters' Garden

All Iroquoian people were traditionally farmers who grew three main crops; corn, beans, and squash, known to the people as the Three Sisters. These were planted and cultivated in extensive fields surrounding the village. Tobacco and sunflowers may have been grown within the village.

The Palisade

Archaeological excavations revealed no evidence of a palisade wall at the Crawford Lake site. However, many other excavated villages of this time period were enclosed with a palisade like the one built here to secure the village today. The lookout platforms provided a vantage point from which to 'keep an eye' on the activities in the fields, the village, and the surrounding woodlands.

The Turtle Clan Longhouse

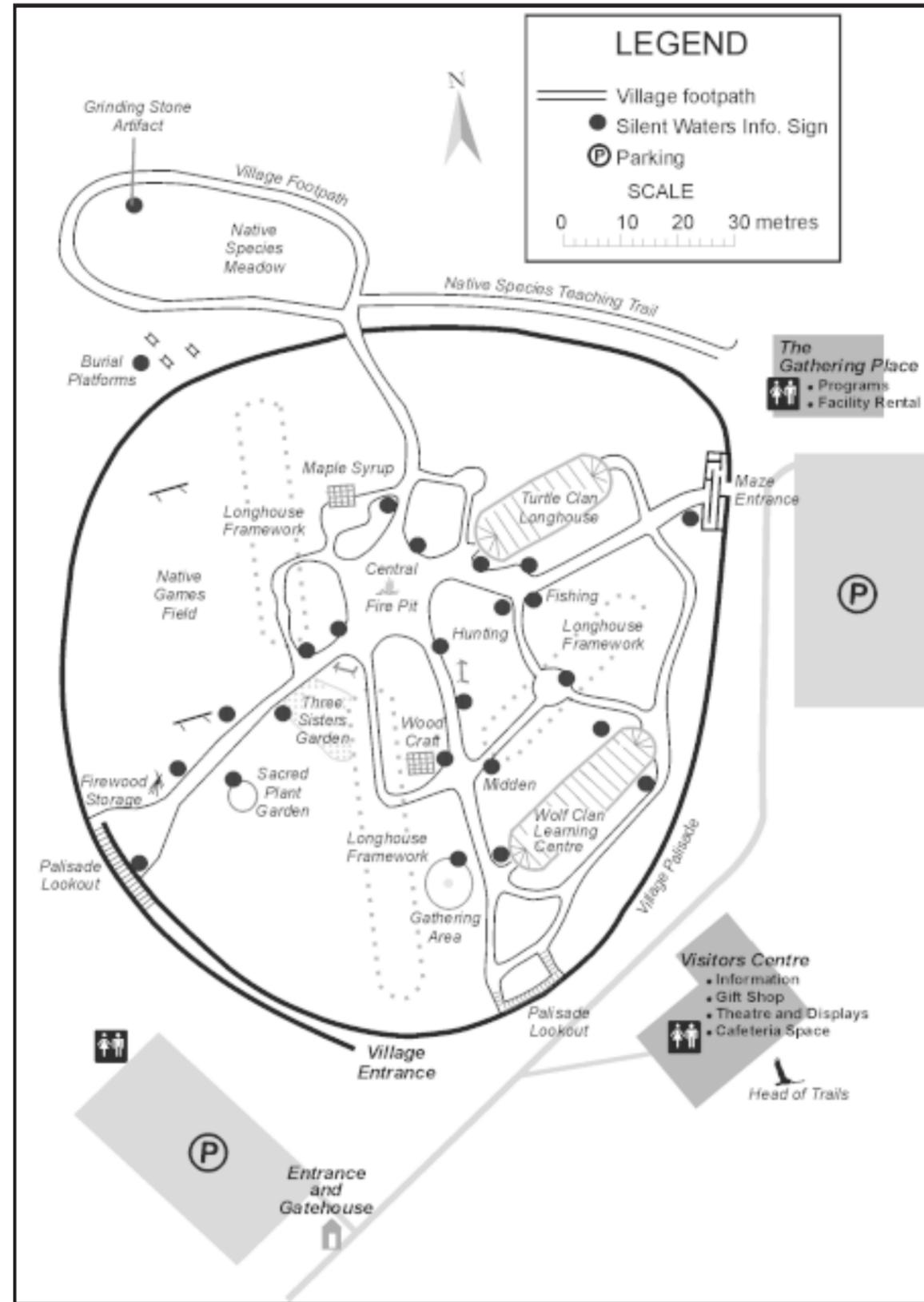
This is the smallest of the longhouses that were uncovered at the site during the archaeological excavations. A longhouse of this size would likely be home to 30-40 family / clan members, (multi-generational and all related on the mother's side of the family). Other longhouses discovered here would have been home to larger family groups/clans up to approximately 100 people. The Turtle clan longhouse is designed to provide visitors with a hands-on experience of what it would be like to live in a longhouse 500 years ago.

The Wolf Clan Longhouse

The Wolf Clan Longhouse is a modern day learning facility that is designed to help visitors learn more about Iroquoian culture, and archaeology through the use of exhibits, displays, and video presentations.

Village Population

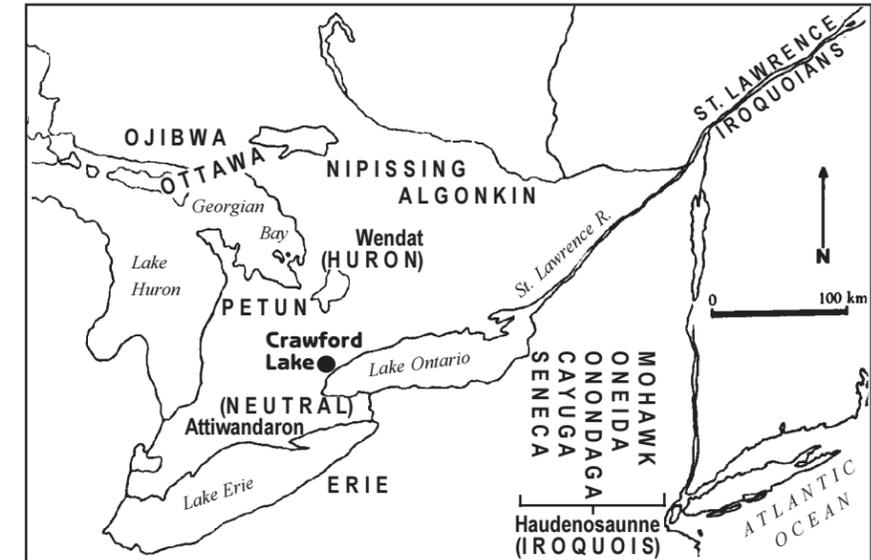
The population of a village is determined by the number and size of the longhouses discovered. This reconstructed village had 5 longhouses and it is estimated that approximately 250 people lived here in the mid-1400's.



The Longhouse People

Although the people who originally lived in this village were Iroquoian, they were **not** the Iroquois. This can be confusing since Iroquoian is often thought to mean the same as Iroquois. However, the two terms are very distinct. Iroquoian is a general term which refers to several groups of people who share similar languages and cultural practices. Some of these groups or Nations include the Wendat (Huron), Attiwandaron (Neutral), Tionontati (Tobacco/Petun), and the Haudenosaunne (Iroquois). The name Iroquois specifically refers to the Five (now Six) Nations (traditionally in northern New York State) that joined to form the confederacy called the League of the Iroquois (known to themselves as the Haudenosaunne or 'People of the Longhouse').

Crawford Lake is a fascinating place to learn more about the traditional Iroquoian lifestyle because this area is located along the traditional boundary between the Wendat (Huron) and the Attiwandaron (Neutral) people. In fact, archaeological research indicates that the Crawford Lake area was occupied by the ancestors of both of these Nations at various time periods [i.e., the Wendat (Huron) in the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries and the Attiwandaron (Neutral) in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries].



The Iroquoians and their neighbours in the early 1600's.

Share in the Discovery all year long!
Visit Crawford Lake every season and experience its unique cultural and natural heritage programs.

Season of the Snowsnake

(January and February)
 Longhouse tours, guided snowshoe hikes and snow shoe rentals, cross-country skiing, crafts and discover snowsnakes.

Sweet Water Season

(March and April)
 Native style maple syrup presentations complete with corn bread. Crafts, longhouse lore and a great fun-filled festival.

Season of Many Frogs Peeping

(April – June)
 Wildflower wonders, crafts, Earth Day Celebration, Kid's Day, hiking and more.

Season of the Three Sisters

(July and August)
 Longhouse lore, Three Sisters Garden, crafts, native games and lakeside sharing.

Season of the Falling Leaves

(September – November)
 Autumn splendour of colours, longhouse lore, fall festivals and lots of fun for everyone!

Season of the First Frost

(November and December)
 Hiking, longhouse tours, crafts, discovery displays and exhibits.

OPEN ALL YEAR!
7 days a week

(limited facilities on weekdays from April - Nov.)

Guided programs/tours
(reservations required 905.854.0234 ext. 221)

Hours of Operation:
10am to 4pm
(unless otherwise posted/specified)

Visit these other Conservation Halton parks for more great natural experiences

Mountsberg – (905) 854-2276

Raptor Centre, maple syrup demonstration, wildlife, biking and hiking

Hilton Falls – (905) 854-0262

Hiking, biking and cross country skiing, Bruce Trail, waterfall

Rattlesnake Point – (905) 878-1147

Scenic cliff lookouts, hiking, rock climbing, group camping

Mount Nemo – (905) 336-1158

Cliff edge trails, scenic lookouts, crevice caves, hiking

Kelso/Glen Eden – (905) 878-5011

Sandy beach, boat rentals, hiking and biking, downhill skiing, snowboarding, group camping

