

Lake Ontario North

Special Places and Species

There are many exciting and accessible natural places to explore within the Lake Ontario North region



1. High Park, situated in the west end of Toronto, is a large urban park with a fascinating natural story to tell. Stroll through the park and observe the restoration work taking place, such as the efforts to bring back the park's black oak savannas with their beautiful wild lupines and other wildflowers. In the fall, you can watch hawks migrating southward from Hawk Hill, just north of the Grenadier Restaurant. Grenadier Pond itself is an interesting study in efforts to restore a natural shoreline and marshes. The park is located at the southwest corner of Parkside Dr. and Bloor St. W.
2. Explore the Ganaraska Forest Conservation Area, an 1,800-hectare tract on the Oak Ridges Moraine. The forest includes numerous trails, excellent lookouts and the Ganaraska Forest Centre. From Hwy. 401 at Port Hope go north on Hwy. 2, then north on County Rd. 10 to Garden Hill, take County Rd. 9 west to Northumberland-Durham boundary, turn north on paved road and go 3 km.
3. Just outside of Whitby is one of the best places in the region to see migrating birds. Cranberry Marsh, part of the Lynde Shores Conservation Area, offers short trails and observation platforms looking out over marsh and meadow. From Hwy. 401, take exit 410 and follow Brock St. 0.5 km south to Victoria St., then turn west and proceed 2.6 km.
4. Oshawa Second Marsh and the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve are also worth a visit. The 123-hectare Second Marsh is undergoing extensive restoration work. Trails lead through open cattail marsh, across the barrier beach and through wooded swampland. Trails from the marsh also link up with the McLaughlin

Reserve to the east and to Darlington Provincial Park. Access these sites from Colinel Sam Dr. east of Farewell Dr. in Oshawa.

5. The Kawartha Lakes area chain of 14 long finger-like lakes that are known for their rich marshes, which attract waterfowl, marsh birds and other aquatic wildlife. The best way to explore the lakes is to bring your canoe. You can put in at Bobcaygeon and paddle south. Or you can paddle the well-forested upper stretches of Pigeon River through Pigeon River Headwaters Conservation Area. From Hwy. 35, take Hwy. 7A west 1.5 km to where the river crosses the road.
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7. Kawartha Highlands Provincial Park.
8. Presqu'ile Provincial Park.
9. Peter's Woods Provincial Nature Reserve.
10. Altberg Southern Shield - Federation Nature Reserve.

For more areas to visit, see A Nature Guide to Ontario, available from Ontario Nature.