

NATURE RESERVES

Kinghurst Forest Nature Reserve

Howard Krug Tract and Rourke-Bandeem Tract

The rustle of maple leaves in the wind far above your head and the smell of wild leek below your feet are only a few of the delights you will encounter at Kinghurst Forest. This 281-hectare reserve in Grey County contains a remarkable, mature maple-beech forest that is a rare example of pre-settlement woodlands in southern Ontario. Many of the trees are 250-300 years old, tower over 100 feet in height, and clearly show the vertical stratification characteristic of a true, old-growth forest. A spectacular show of wildflowers greets visitors in the spring, as do provincially rare plants such as Hart's-tongue fern (*Phyllitis scolopendrium* var. *americana*). Designated as a provincially significant Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), Kinghurst Forest is a special place that offers the naturalist a rare glimpse into Ontario's natural past.

In early 1998, the Federation received Kinghurst Forest (241 hectares) through a landmark bequest from Howard H. Krug. A keen and well-respected conservationist, Mr. Krug took great care in managing the Krug family lands and as a result, Kinghurst Forest is now one of Ontario's outstanding natural areas. In December 1997, the Federation purchased an additional 40 hectares of the Kinghurst Forest ANSI within the land given to the Federation by Howard Krug. This is primarily old pasture and swamp.

There are many other features that add to the charm and natural diversity of Kinghurst Forest. For avid birders, there are excellent opportunities to spot interior forest birds. Scarlet tanagers are a common sight, as are many species of warblers. Also found on the reserve are several kettle depressions that hold woodland ponds, open bogs and swamp forests. The east side of the reserve has a series of drowned trees, and swamp and marsh communities ringed by cedar. Other plant communities in Kinghurst Forest are open fen, coniferous-deciduous forest, and a treed bog.

The third largest of the Federation's reserves, Kinghurst Forest is an inspiring sight and a great pleasure to visit.

How to get there

To visit Kinghurst Forest, follow Hwy. 6 north from Durham to Dornoch and turn west onto County Rd. 25. Travel about 5 km to Concession 4 and turn

north. The road passes several pasture fields and starts to curve, with trees closing in on either side. On the west side of the road, you will see the first of two gates. Beyond it is an old track that doubles as a great walking trail that runs to the 6th concession road. PLEASE NOTE: This is a snowmobile trail in winter. Use caution when on the trail.

Parking can be found further north on the road. The second gate leads to a small parking lot. From this point you can either walk south to the snowmobile trail or start walking along the trail that leads from the parking lot.

You may also enter from the west side of the property. Proceed north on Concession 6 (a few kilometres west of Concession 4). Just past a sideroad on your left is a driveway leading to a white house and an old wooden barn. There is a Federation nature reserve sign marking the entrance. You may park just off the road. DO NOT BLOCK THE DRIVEWAY OR PROCEED UP THE DRIVEWAY WITH YOUR VEHICLE. You may proceed along the drive that runs past the white house. The white house is occupied. Please respect their access and privacy. The trail you are on runs across the entire property and is the same trail that can be entered from Concession 4.