



Explore the Outdoors

If it's time to stumble upon something new, a day of exploring in Hamilton Halton Brant will reveal a diverse collection of new experiences.

From rare wildlife, like the first bald eagles to hatch on the Canadian shoreline of Lake Ontario in over 50 years, to ancient lime kilns, breathtaking waterfalls and a reconstructed 15th-century Iroquoian village, this land of endless inspiration will leave you reaching for the camera and telling friends, "You won't believe what we found today." Use these resources to plan a day of discovery:

One-of-a-Kind Finds

- Spencer Gorge/ Webster's Falls Conservation Area
- Eramosa Karst Conservation Area
- Crawford Lake Conservation Area
- Royal Botanical Gardens
- Confederation Park

Trip Ideas

Subterranean Exploration

As one of southern Ontario's last glaciers slowly began to melt about 13,000 years ago, the impact of the dissolving ice on stone created a series of fascinating geological features that include sinkholes, disappearing streams, caves and valleys known today as the Eramosa Karst.

Home to what's believed to be the largest number of unique karst features in any protected area in the province, Eramosa Karst Conservation Area features trails, boardwalks and bridges to encourage exploration of these unique geological formations that include a natural dolomitic limestone bridge and Ontario's tenth largest cave.

Be sure to bring binoculars! Eramosa Karst Conservation Area is also a feeding area for threatened bird species, including the bobolink and the chimney swift.

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Discover a Meromictic Lake

Spend a day exploring at Crawford Lake Conservation Area and discover just how intertwined the studies of geology, archeology and history can be. With a basin that's deeper than its surface area, the depths of Crawford Lake are rarely, if ever, disturbed by wind or temperature changes. This means that the annual layers of sediment at the bottom of the lake provide an accurate record of the human and natural history of the lake and surrounding area that goes back hundreds of years.

The knowledge that's been gained from this rare lake, as well as the 11 longhouses that were uncovered on these historic lands, has been used to reconstruct a 15th-century Iroquoian village for visitors to explore.

Cootes Paradise

Nestled between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment, Royal Botanical Gardens' Cootes Paradise offers nature lovers access to a 320-hectare river-mouth marsh, glacial plateaus, 16 creeks and 25 kilometres of shoreline through its 18-kilometre trail system. The Marsh Boardwalk provides access to the Spencer Creek Delta, one of the largest creek deltas on Lake Ontario.

Look closely and discover some new residents that have created quite a stir with local birdwatchers: the first bald eagles to hatch on the Canadian shoreline of Lake Ontario in over 50 years! Paddlers will want to make use of the canoe launch located at Princess Point.

Find a Geo-cache Stash

Bring along a GPS or smartphone with a geocaching app and take part in a modern-day scavenger hunt! Our conservation areas are a great place to search for hidden caches, but please remember to stick to maintained trails to protect the natural habitat and follow the guidelines found on conservation area websites to hide a new cache.

For great savings on outdoor adventures in Hamilton Halton Brant, please visit our Special Offers page at www.ourtruenature.ca/offers. For a step-by-step approach to planning the perfect outdoor escape for families, new explorers and avid adventurers, download our Nature Unexpected magazine at www.ourtruenature.ca/magazine.

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