

Hiking Trails at Tawasentha Park Town of Guilderland



Birches at Tawasentha Park

WELCOME to the hiking trails at Tawasentha Park. It is our hope that this information about the Park and the trails will enhance your visit to Guilderland's flagship park.

A Brief History

Tawasentha Park, a 192.5 acre jewel in the geographic center of the Town of Guilderland, was created with the acquisition of two large tracts of land. The first tract of 95 acres, the main park section, was purchased in 1969 and is located east of the Normans Kill and south of Route 146. Prior to the Town's purchase, the property had already been enjoyed by many Guilderland residents for swimming, picnicking and other outdoor activities. The second tract of 97.5 acres, the Winter Recreation/Community Gardens section, was purchased in 1989 and is

located west of the Normans Kill and on the north and south sides of Route 146. It had been operated as a dairy farm for many years.

The Hiking Trails

The hiking trails at the park include three distinct areas: the main park, the winter recreation (WRA) and the community gardens. The trails begin at the parking lot in each of the three areas. Hiking in a clockwise direction is recommended.

Main Park Trails

Park near the swimming pool. A short connector trail (**yellow** markers) leads to a loop trail (**red** markers) which then follows the perimeter of the original Tawasentha Park. It features a long stretch along the bank of the Normans Kill, some pleasant hiking through woods and an excellent view of the Heldeberg Escarpment to the west beyond the Vale of Tawasentha. Much of the trail follows the Tawasentha Cross-Country course and is the location of the annual Guilderland Invitational Cross-Country meet and the Schoolcraft Trail Run. A footbridge across the Normans Kill links the Mail Park Trails with the Winter Recreation Trails.

Winter Recreation Trails (WRA)

Park at the WRA parking lot. This area consists of three separate loops and a short link trail, all accessible from the parking lot.

The lower loop (**blue** markers) begins on the east side of the parking lot, crosses open meadows and hugs the west bank of the Normans Kill. It is primarily flat except for the down-slope at the beginning and up-slope at the end. Look for the occasional canoe on the Normans Kill and for birds and animal life in the adjoining meadows.

The middle loop (**red** markers) begins at the west side of the parking lot. This loop combines open meadows and woodland terrain.

The upper loop (**green** markers) is accessible from the middle loop. The entire trail is adjacent to an open meadow. The final leg is along the edge of the picturesque ravine. A small waterfall near the upstream end of the ravine is visible after a rainfall. The upper loop rises above the Normans Kill valley and offers a vista of the Battle of Normankill area on the north side of Route 146. This Battle in August, 1777, a skirmish between Continental militia and Tories, sought to disrupt supply lines to the Continental troops. It was fought five weeks prior to the Battle of Saratoga and was the only Revolutionary War battle that occurred in Albany County. Beyond the battlefield site and on a clear day, the foothills of the Adirondacks can be seen on the horizon.

The link (**yellow** markers) connects the lower and middle loop trails. The hike is through woodlands and a deep ravine is visible to the side of the trail.

Community Gardens Trails

This trail consist of two loops: one loop (**blue** markers) circles the community gardens and second loop (**yellow** markers) circles an old orchard field of the former Houck dairy farm. The Guilderland Rock Adventure Barn at this location also houses the climbing wall. Picnic tables and a pavilion are also available behind the barn for the use of Town residents.

Wildlife Preserve

The meadows along the trails receive limited mowing by the Town of Guilderland Parks

Department. As a result, they provide favorable habitat for many species of birds, including the eastern meadowlark, bobolink, the upland sandpiper, wild turkey, and a variety of sparrows. These species build their nests, raise young and forage in hayfields, meadows and pastures during the summer. In addition to the birds, the longer grasses provide cover and food for other animals such as deer, fox, woodchuck, coyotes, etc. Smaller animals living in the meadows also attract a variety of raptors. Binoculars are useful in viewing these wonders of nature. **Hunting is PROHIBITED.**

Important Notes

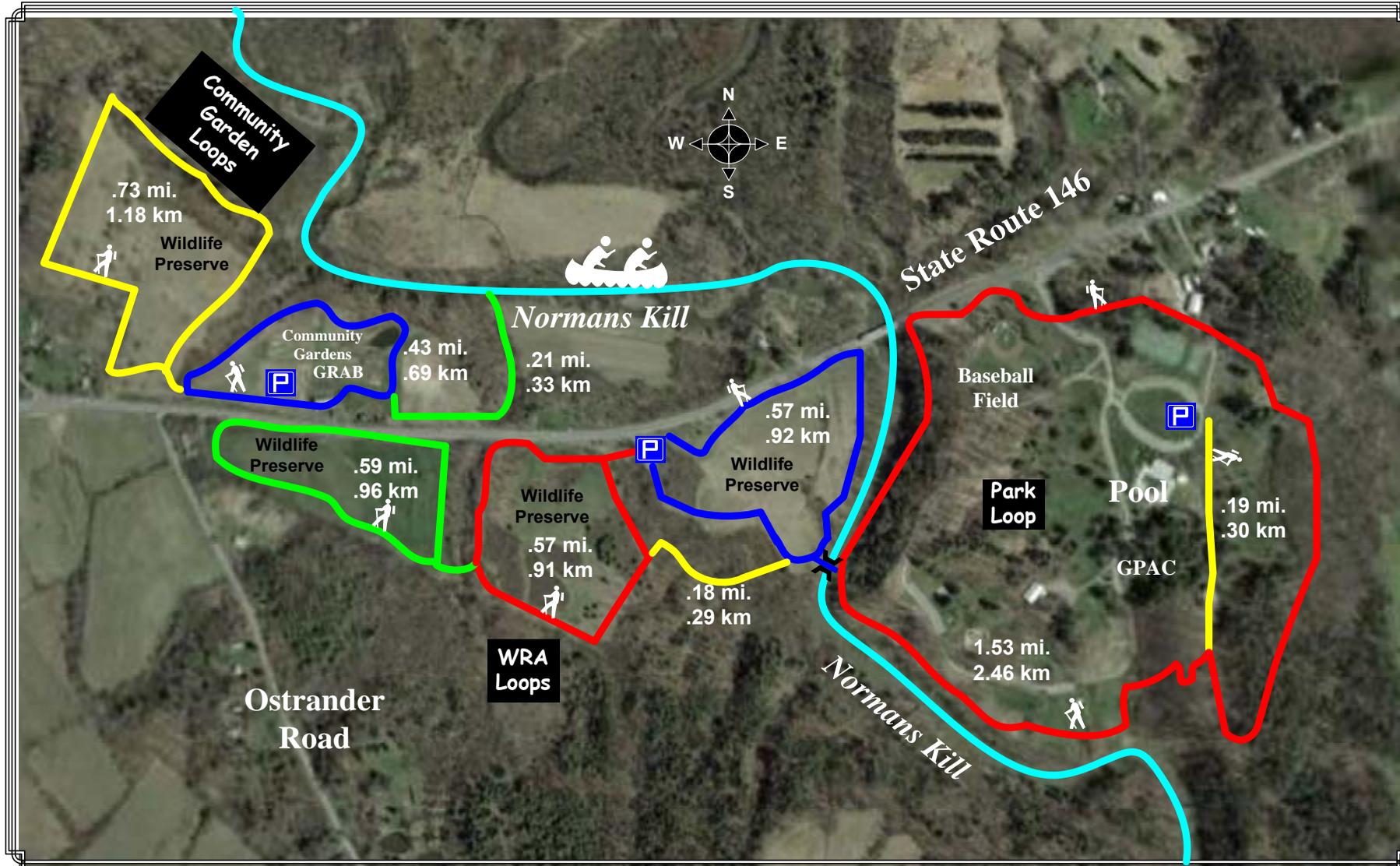
If you choose to bring your "best friend", you are reminded that all dogs **MUST BE KEPT ON LEASH AT ALL TIMES WHILE IN THE PARK AND HIKING THE TRAILS.** Town regulations also require the removal of dog excrement from the trails and from other park locations.

All deer habitats including Tawasentha Park contain deer ticks that can transmit **Lyme disease.** Take all necessary precautions including staying on the trail. A number of benches and picnic tables are located on the trails for picnicking, relaxing, and enjoying the scenery. Please refrain from picking the flowers so that others may enjoy their beauty.



Town of Guilderland - Tawasentha Park Hiking Trails

Please return trail map to kiosk after hike



TRAIL GUIDE

- Leash ALL Pets
- Beware of Ticks
- Stay on Trails
- Leave flowers for others to enjoy

PROHIBITED

- Hunting
- Motorized Vehicles
- Horses

