

Joseph E. Ibberson Conservation Area

Straddling Peters Mountain, the 803-acre Joseph E. Ibberson Conservation Area is dominated by large hardwood trees. This large block of nearly unbroken forest is a haven for wildlife like forest warblers and other deep-woods animals. A main attraction to the conservation area is the elaborate trail system.

Directions

From PA 322/22, take PA 225 north for 4.5 miles. Just before entering the village of Matamoras, turn right on Camp Hebron Road and follow it for 4.5 miles. The conservation area is on the right.



Recreational Opportunities

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: All hiking trails in the Conservation Area are open for cross-country skiing. Evergreen and Old Sawmill trails are recommended for cross-country skiing.

HUNTING AND FIREARMS: About 780 acres are open to hunting, trapping and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are black bear, deer, turkey, grouse, rabbit and squirrel.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the Little Buffalo State Park office for ADA accessible hunting information.

Use **extreme caution** with firearms at all times. Other visitors use the park during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment used for hunting may be uncased and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment shall be kept in the owner's car, trailer or leased campsite. The only exception is that law enforcement officers and individuals with a valid *Pennsylvania License to Carry Firearms* may carry said firearm concealed on their person while they are within the park.

Environmental Education and Interpretation

The Joseph E. Ibberson Conservation Area offers a wide variety of environmental education and interpretive programs. Through hands-on activities, guided walks and evening programs, participants gain appreciation, understanding, and develop a sense of stewardship toward natural and cultural resources.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and youth groups. Group programs must be arranged in advance and may be scheduled by calling the Little Buffalo State Park office.

Programs are offered from April through October. Many programs feature the abundant wildlife and forest management practices that can be seen in the conservation area. For more detailed information on programs, contact the Little Buffalo State Park office or go online at www.visitPAParks.com.



What is a Conservation Area?

This designation is for land donated to the Bureau of State Parks and managed for the purposes of preserving open space, conserving natural resources, and providing opportunities for passive, non-motorized, low density outdoor recreation and environmental education activities.

A conservation area is characterized as a large area with few improvements and no through roads. Recreational facilities and development are minimal. Conservation areas are used for low impact recreation and serve as outdoor classrooms. Conservation areas serve as examples of proper stewardship and resource management.

What is a Restrictive Covenant?

A restrictive covenant is a condition that is written into a deed, either by the seller or person donating the property, that

Joseph E. Ibberson 1917-2011

After graduation from Yale in 1948, Joe was recruited and hired by the Department of Forests and Waters, Bureau of Forestry, to develop the first forest management plans for the 2,000,000 acres of Pennsylvania state forest land. By 1955, all of the forests were mapped and had management plans.

Joe then created the Division of Forests Advisory Services which further expanded the management plans and targeted the preservation of endangered species and wetlands.

From this work grew the Division of Forest Pest Management, which became a recognized leader in rearing and releasing predators and parasites to effectively control forest pests.

Joe started a forest genetics program that reorganized the tree nurseries to produce large quantities of desirable and improved species.

Joe started the service forester program and now there are foresters in many counties to aid private citizens in managing their forested land.

In 1977, Joe retired from the Bureau of Forestry but continued to actively tree farm his own property and serve as a forestry consultant. That same year, Joe received the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Wildlife Conservation Award. In 1998, he received the American Forest Foundation's Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year award for Pennsylvania. In 1999, Joe received their Outstanding Management of Resources Award for the northeastern states.

To train foresters to help the state's private woodland owners properly manage their forests, Joe endowed a chair at The Pennsylvania State University.

Joe continued to work with land owners across the Commonwealth to participate in the conservation areas program until his death in 2011.

The Conservation Area

In 1962, Joe began buying land to create a tree farm on

Watching Wildlife

The Forest

The common tree species of Joseph E. Ibberson Conservation Area are red, black, scarlet and chestnut oak, white, Virginia, and table mountain pine, tulip poplar, eastern hemlock, black gum, basswood, black walnut, black locust, wild black cherry, black birch, red maple, sassafras, American beech and hickories. This diversity of trees produces nuts, seeds, berries and browse for wildlife like white-tailed deer, squirrels, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, black bear and many species of birds.

These tree species are just the latest species to grow here. The original forest, before settlers arrived, was probably large white pine and eastern hemlocks. This dark, quiet forest quickly fell to the logger's ax. The forest that regrew was probably similar to the forest of today, with the addition of the American chestnut. The impressive chestnut dominated some of the forests of Pennsylvania until a blight killed most of the trees. Occasional American chestnuts still survive long enough to produce nuts, but the blight eventually kills them.

Drastic changes like forest fires have probably altered this forest several times. Another change is happening right now. Thousands of white pine seedlings are growing under the taller deciduous trees. For years the mature pines along Pine Trail and other locations deposited seeds throughout the forest, but the seeds never germinated. Two successive years of defoliation of the deciduous trees by gypsy moths allowed sunlight to strike the forest floor, which caused the white pine seeds to germinate. It will be interesting to see if the white pines will replace the deciduous trees, making this forest resemble the original dark, quiet forest.

Geology

The conservation area is in the Ridge and Valley Province of the Appalachian Mountains, which is characterized by long parallel mountain ridges and wide, flat valleys. These mountains were raised up by the collisions of the continents

must be adhered to by the person or organization that assumes possession of the property. Some of the restrictive covenants placed on the transfer of this property include:

- The land is intended for use, enjoyment and education of all citizens of the Commonwealth. Environmental, outdoor, and forest resources management education will be emphasized.

- Only passive recreational activities will be allowed. Horseback riding, biking and motorized equipment, with the exception of official use equipment and accommodations for people with disabilities, are prohibited.

- Acceptable forestry practices will govern resource management. Generally, only dead and downed trees should be harvested, except on forest demonstration areas.



Joseph Ibberson receives an award from Governor Tom Ridge

which he practiced various forms of forest management.

On December 9, 1998, Joseph E. Ibberson donated the land to the Commonwealth. The stated purpose of the donation was to "recognize the need of people for healthful recreation and a place where they can learn about the environment on which they depend for quality of life." It became the first conservation area in the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks. Upon Joe's death, an additional 450 acres of land was donated to the conservation area.

I continue to search for new ideas to effectively preserve the natural resources of Pennsylvania, while sustaining recreational use and the harvesting of wood products.

- Joseph E. Ibberson



Pink lady's slipper

of North America and Africa. These mountain building events, called orogenies, folded and bent the rock layers and lifted them up. The Appalachian Mountains were once very tall, but 220 million years of erosion have worn away the tops of the mountains, leaving behind wide, flat valleys and short, steep mountains of hard rock.

Most of the bedrock of Peters Mountain is composed of hard sandstone tilted at a steep angle. Much of Powells Valley is underlain by a combination of soft rocks like shales, siltstones and sandstones. Due to the rich valley soils, this area is often called the "bread basket of Dauphin County."



History

The land of the conservation area has been inhabited for over 11,000 years. The nearby Shoop Site is one of the largest and oldest Paleo-Indian sites in eastern North America. The Shoop Site is unusual in that it is near a hilltop, unlike most Paleo-Indian sites which are found in the floodplain. Archaeologists theorize that the Paleo-Indians were hunting migrating caribou. It is interesting that most of the stone tools found at the site were made from stone found 250 miles north in New York.

Subsequent inhabitants used the Shoop Site as a temporary shelter or hunting camp. Other Indians occupying or passing through the area were the Shawnee, Nanticoke, Lenni Lenape and Iroquois League of Six Nations. The Susquehannock Indians claimed the land at the time European settlers arrived at Peters Mountain and Powells Valley.

Thousands of artifacts from the Shoop site are exhibited in the Smithsonian Institution and the Pennsylvania State Museum. The Shoop Site is on private land and is not open to the collecting of artifacts.

In 1726, Peter Allen built a stone home on the south side of a mountain, which has since been called Peters Mountain. North of the conservation area is Powells Creek and Powells Valley, named for Margaret Powell who owned the land at the creek mouth in the 1760s. South of the conservation area is Clarks Valley, named for early landowner William Clark. Clark owned 585 acres that later became the Stackpole Farms at the intersection of PA 225 and PA 325.

The Augusta Road, now PA 225, was an alternate route north to avoid passing too close to the Susquehanna River. The river route was a travel route often used by American Indians and could be dangerous when there were strained relations with the American Indians. The Peter Allen House, the stone house at the intersection of PA 225 and PA 325, was built in 1726 by Peter Allen. It is the oldest house in Dauphin County. It was a tollhouse, hotel and stagecoach stop. The house is currently privately owned.



A second very old house is along the Augusta Road, north of Peters Mountain by Powells Creek, at the intersection of PA 225 and Back Road. This tollhouse and stagecoach stop was a safe place to stop before or after crossing Peters Mountain. The house is currently privately owned.

A portion of the Victoria Trail passes through the southeastern corner of the conservation area and intersects the Appalachian Trail. The Victoria Trail connected the nearby Victoria Iron Furnace to some of its timber supply. The furnace was on the south side of Peters Mountain in Clarks Valley and was in operation from 1830 to 1857. The land was repeatedly logged to supply wood for charcoal for the furnace. The last steam sawmill in Dauphin County, Baker's Sawmill, was within the land of the conservation area.

Nearby Attractions

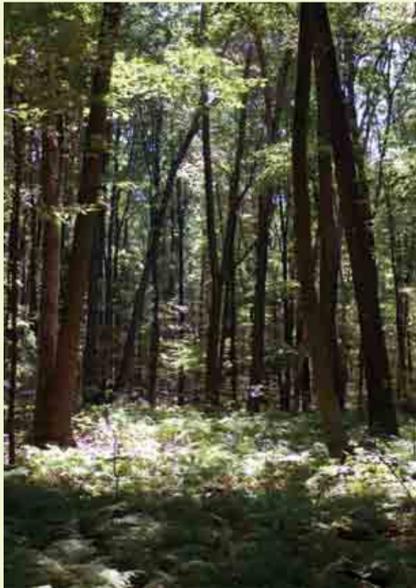
Information on nearby attractions is available from the Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitors Bureau. www.visitthersheyharrisburg.org

FORT HUNTER MANSION AND PARK: Along PA 443 north of Harrisburg, this 40-acre Dauphin County park was a settlement fort in the 1750s during the French and Indian War. The park has playgrounds, picnic areas and tours of the mansion. www.forthunter.org

BOYD BIG TREE PRESERVE CONSERVATION

AREA: One mountain range to the south is Boyd Big Tree Preserve Conservation Area. Large trees of numerous species are scattered throughout the area, which provides habitat for deep forests birds, especially warblers. The large field is filled with blooming butterfly weed in late-July and early-August and attracts many butterflies.

CITY OF HARRISBURG: The historic capital of Pennsylvania has many attractions, including: PA State Museum, State Capitol, Governor's Mansion, Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts, National Civil War Museum and other attractions.



Access for People with Disabilities

This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible for people with disabilities. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the park you plan to visit.

In an Emergency

Contact a park employee or dial 911. For directions to the nearest hospital, look on the bulletin board at the parking area.

NEAREST HOSPITAL

Harrisburg Hospital
101 South Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
717-782-3131



For More Information Contact:

Joseph E. Ibberson Conservation Area
c/o Little Buffalo State Park
1579 State Park Road
Newport, PA 17074-9428
717-567-9255
email: littlebuffsp@pa.gov
GPS: Lat. 40.44246 Long. -76.85918
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www.visitPAParks.com

Information and Reservations

Make online reservations at:
www.visitPAParks.com or call toll-free
888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Monday to Saturday, for state park information
and reservations.

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Protect and Preserve Our Parks

Please make your visit safe and enjoyable. Obey all posted rules and regulations and respect fellow visitors and the resources of the park.

- Be prepared and bring the proper equipment. Natural areas may possess hazards. Your personal safety and that of your family are your responsibility.

- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

- Because uncontrolled pets may chase wildlife or frighten visitors, pets must be controlled and attended at all times and on a leash, caged or crated.

- Do your part to keep wildlife wild! Enjoy wildlife from a safe distance and do not feed or approach wild animals.

- Please park only in designated areas and obey all traffic regulations.

- Please recycle. Place trash accumulated during your stay in proper receptacles or take it home with you.

- Soliciting and posting signs are prohibited without approval from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Hiking

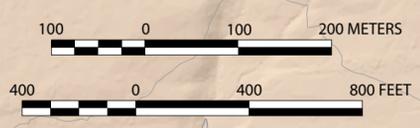
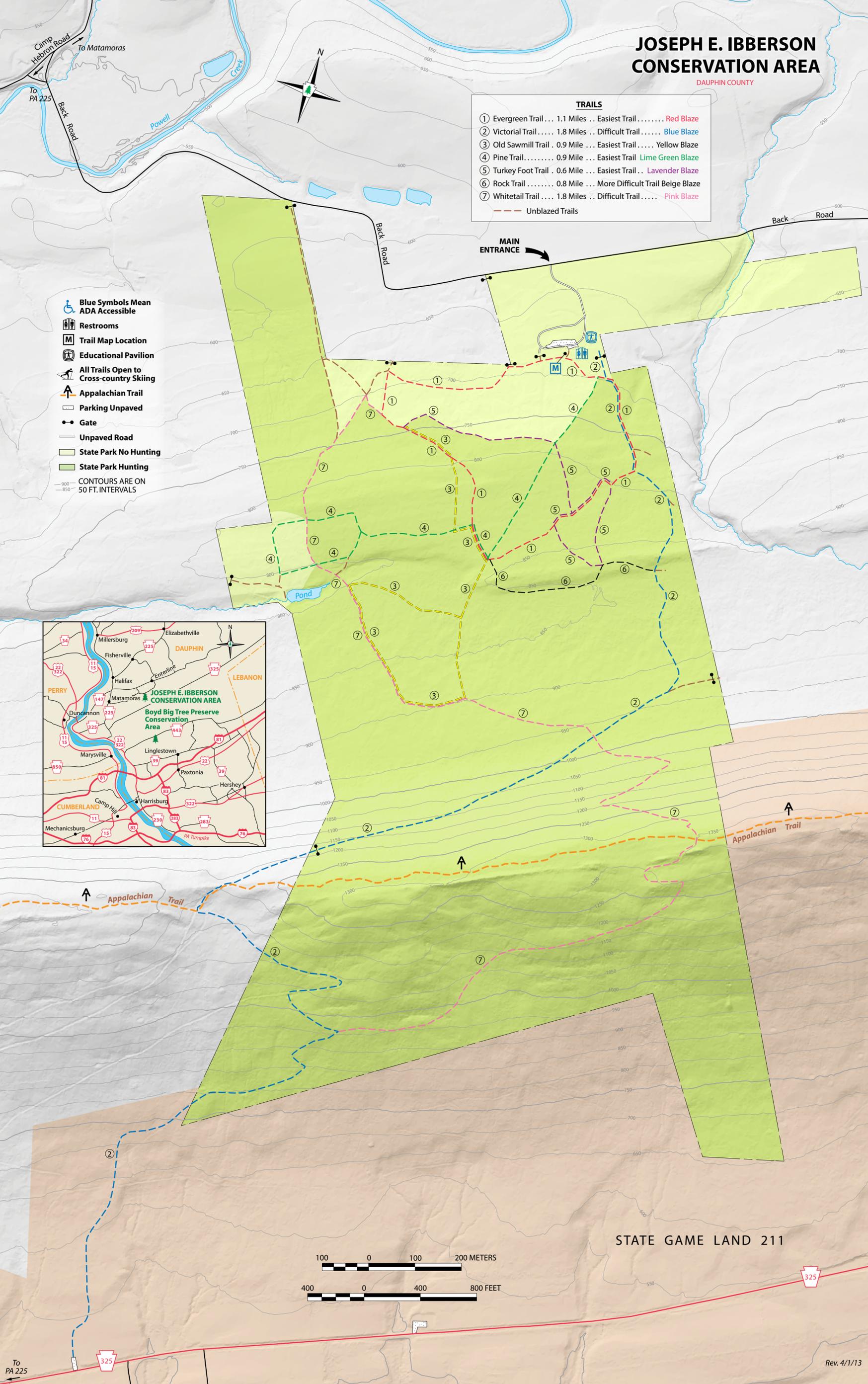
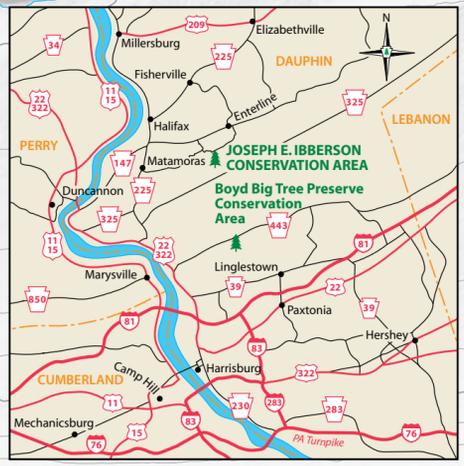


JOSEPH E. IBBERSON CONSERVATION AREA

DAUPHIN COUNTY

- TRAILS**
- ① Evergreen Trail . . . 1.1 Miles . . . Easiest Trail **Red Blaze**
 - ② Victorial Trail 1.8 Miles . . . Difficult Trail **Blue Blaze**
 - ③ Old Sawmill Trail . 0.9 Mile . . . Easiest Trail **Yellow Blaze**
 - ④ Pine Trail 0.9 Mile . . . Easiest Trail **Lime Green Blaze**
 - ⑤ Turkey Foot Trail . 0.6 Mile . . . Easiest Trail . . . **Lavender Blaze**
 - ⑥ Rock Trail 0.8 Mile . . . More Difficult Trail **Beige Blaze**
 - ⑦ Whitetail Trail 1.8 Miles . . . Difficult Trail **Pink Blaze**
- Unblazed Trails

- Blue Symbols Mean ADA Accessible
- Restrooms
- Trail Map Location
- Educational Pavilion
- All Trails Open to Cross-country Skiing
- Appalachian Trail
- Parking Unpaved
- Gate
- Unpaved Road
- State Park No Hunting
- State Park Hunting
- CONTOURS ARE ON 50 FT. INTERVALS



- ① EVERGREEN TRAIL: 1.1 miles, red blazes, easiest hiking**
This trail begins at the east gate and is a nice loop trail that is also great for cross-country skiing.
- ② VICTORIA TRAIL: 3 miles, medium blue blazes, most difficult hiking**
This rugged footpath begins by the Education Pavilion, runs near the eastern boundary, crosses over to the west end of the park on the historic Victoria Road and meets the Appalachian Trail for a distance of 1.8 miles. From there, the trail winds down to Game Land 211 and PA 325 for a distance of 1.2 miles. This is the most difficult trail in the conservation area.
- ③ OLD SAWMILL TRAIL: 0.9 mile, yellow blazes, easiest hiking**
The loop portion of this trail encircles the old location of Baker's Sawmill, the last steam sawmill in Dauphin County. This is a nice trail for cross-country skiing.
- ④ PINE TRAIL: 0.9 mile, lime green blazes, easiest hiking**
This trail begins at Evergreen Trail, crosses the conservation area, and loops near the Pond. Pine Trail runs through a multitude of forest habitats and is named for the many white pines along the middle section of the trail.
- ⑤ TURKEY FOOT TRAIL: 0.6 mile, lavender blazes, easiest hiking**
Access this trail from the western end of Evergreen Trail. Turkey Foot Trail is a loop trail that offers many good opportunities to view wildlife.
- ⑥ ROCK TRAIL: 0.8 mile, beige blaze, more difficult hiking**
This trail goes through some very rocky areas. Rock Trail begins at the intersection of Evergreen, Pine and Old Sawmill trails.
- ⑦ WHITETAIL TRAIL: 1.8 miles, pink blazes, most difficult hiking**
This trail begins at the conservation area's west gate, crosses Victoria and Appalachian trails and the Pond, and ends by reconnecting to Victoria Trail on the south side of Peters Mountain. The mountain section is rugged and includes switchbacks and stone stairs in places. A nice view of Powells Valley can be seen from a stone bench on the north side of the mountain. This is a good trail for viewing wildlife.
- APPALACHIAN TRAIL: 0.5 mile, white blazes, more difficult hiking**
The famous, national scenic trail extends 2,000 miles from Springer Mountain in northern Georgia to Mount Katahdin in central Maine. The Appalachian Trail is reached from Victoria and Whitetail trails. Just over half of a mile of this famed trail traverses the Conservation Area.

Tell us about your hike at:

ExplorePAtrails.
powered by you



Pileated Woodpecker