



For More Information Contact:

Varden Conservation Area
c/o Promised Land State Park
100 Lower Lake Road
Greentown, PA 18426-9735
570-676-3428

email: promisedlandsp@pa.gov
GPS: Lat. 41.48758 Long. -75.38254
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Information and Reservations

Make online reservations at:

www.visitPAparks.com or call toll-free
888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to
5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday, for state park
information and reservations.

www.visitPAparks.com visitPAparks

Varden Conservation Area

A gift from veterinarian Dr. Mead Shaffer, the 444-acre Varden Conservation Area is in Wayne County. This magnanimous gift is in an area that was once a remote section of the state, which is now beginning to feel the pressure of development. The land will be protected and used for future generations as a respite from daily life. Varden is a place to learn about Pennsylvania's wonderful natural history. The property is managed by Promised Land State Park, which is in Pike County.

"Environmental education always has been a primary concern of mine. I trust this land will allow present and future generations to observe and study the diverse ecology found in the Varden Conservation Area." - Dr. Shaffer

Directions

Varden is at the intersection of PA 196 and PA 296, in Wayne County. Tannery Road provides access to the Tannery Tract. Mid Valley Road provides access to the Mid Valley Tract.

Recreational Opportunities

FISHING: The pond in the Tannery Tract has largemouth and smallmouth bass, sunfish, and catfish. Middle Creek provides trout fishing. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.

HUNTING AND FIREARMS: The Tannery Tract is open to hunting, trapping, and dog-training during established seasons. Common game species are deer, bear, and turkey.

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 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. Exceptions include: law enforcement officers and individuals with a valid *Pennsylvania License to Carry Firearms* are authorized to carry a firearm concealed on their person while they are within a state park.

Hiking

Varden Conservation Area offers a variety of short hiking trails through farm fields, forests, and wetlands. Please stay on the trails and respect private property.

TANNERY TRACT TRAILS: 4.03 miles of trail

Bluebird Trail: 0.71 mile

This trail winds around the edges of meadows and is a good trail for observing plants and animals. Numerous bluebird boxes along the trail are monitored by volunteers.

Middle Creek Trail: 0.45 mile

This trail follows the course of Middle Creek at the edge of a large, flat meadow and ends at the conservation area boundary.

Pond Loop: 0.73 mile

This ADA accessible trail begins at the teaching pavilion in the Tannery Tract, loops around to Middle Creek, passes through a forested area around a pond, and then wraps back to the pavilion.

Shortcut Trail: 0.1 mile

This wooded road is between Steel Tower Trail and the barn on Tannery Trail.

Steel Tower Trail: 0.27 mile

This trail traverses the road beneath a portion of a power line.

Tall Timber Trail: 0.35 mile

This rugged trail winds through forest connecting Wood Tower Trail to Tannery Trail.

Tannery Trail: 0.63 mile

This trail begins on Pond Trail at the footbridge that crosses Middle Creek. Tannery Trail crosses an old meadow, winds through a hemlock forest, and then merges with Bluebird Trail. Most of the trail follows an abandoned township road.

Wildcat Trail: 0.37 mile

This trail starts off of Hemlock Road, across from the Western Wayne Middle School entrance, and winds through the forest and connects with Bluebird Trail in a meadow.

Wood Tower Trail: 0.79 mile

This trail begins on Bluebird Trail, intersects Tall Timber Trail, and ends near Middle Creek. Wood Tower Trail follows the original power line built in the 1920s to carry electricity from Lake Wallenpaupack to the Lackawanna Valley.

MID VALLEY TRACT TRAILS: 3.32 miles of trails

Bear Paw Trail: 0.62 mile

This trail begins at the Mid Valley Tract access area then splits into a loop that follows the western edge of the park and travels through a conifer plantation planted by Dr. Shaffer.

Beechwood Trail: 0.15 mile

A branch off of Overlook Ridge Trail, Beechwood Trail travels through northern hardwood forests and a utility right-of-way.

Critters Run: 0.08 mile

The shortest trail in the conservation area, Critters Run connects the northern and southern portions of Overlook Ridge Trail. Hemlock, white pine, and many northern hardwoods border this trail.

Deer Run: 0.12 mile

This trail bisects Overlook Ridge Trail, going east to west and through a utility right-of-way.

Holster Creek Trail: 0.55 mile

This trail follows Middle Creek, then crosses Mid Valley Road to meet Shaffers Way Trail. Diverse vegetation can be seen along Holster Creek Trail.

Overlook Ridge Trail: 1.14 miles

Beginning and ending on Bear Paw Trail, Overlook Ridge Trail travels the heart of the Mid Valley Tract. This is an

excellent trail to see many tree species, including hemlock, white pine, red maple, and ash.

Pond View Trail: 0.43 mile

This trail intersects with Shaffers Way Trail twice, and then loops partway around the spring-fed pond. Amphibians and other wildlife can be seen during the spring and summer months.

Shaffers Way: 0.23 mile

Connecting Overlook Ridge and Pond View trails, and intersecting Holster Creek Trail, Shaffers Way travels through hundreds of conifers planted by the man who donated the property to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Tell us about your hike at: explorepatrails.com

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING AND SNOWSHOEING:

All trails are recommended for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing when conditions permit.

Environmental Education and Interpretation

Varden Conservation Area offers a wide variety of environmental education programs. Through hands-on activities, guided walks, and special events, participants gain appreciation and understanding, as well as develop a sense of stewardship toward natural and cultural resources.

Standards-based environmental education programs are available to school and youth groups. Programs must be arranged in advance and may be scheduled by contacting the environmental education specialist at the Promised Land 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 Promised Land State Park.

History

The Varden area has been home to eight generations of the Shaffer family, beginning with John Shaffer in 1786. The chimney of the John Shaffer house is located in the southwest corner of the Tannery tract. A wayside can be found at the site that interprets this unique historical feature. The current Shaffer, Dr. Mead Shaffer, donated the 430 acres of land that became Varden Conservation Area.

The name Varden was given to the area by an early postmaster who liked the character Dolly Varden from the Charles Dickens book *Barnaby Rudge*.

Wildlife Watching

There are many opportunities to see wildlife in the conservation area. The most common trees in the forest are the native red maple and hemlock. In addition to the native trees of the area, many trees were planted, including: blue, white, and Norway spruce, ash, white birch, red and white pine, and Douglas and balsam fir. The diverse forest and wetland habitats produce ideal conditions for amphibians, mammals, and birds. White-tailed deer, black bear, squirrel, wild turkey, beaver, and many species of birds inhabit the area.

Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau. 800-POCONOS www.poconomountains.com

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 physically controlled and attended at all times and on a leash, caged, or crated. Electronic fences and leashes are prohibited.

- 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.

- Varden Conservation Area is a carry in, carry out facility. Please take your trash and recyclables home with you.

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

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 Call 911

Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards.

NEAREST HOSPITAL

Wayne Memorial Hospital
601 Park Street
Honesdale, PA 18431
570-253-8100

