

Beaver Lake Nature Center

Just 15 minutes northwest of Syracuse, this nature center on a glacial lake attracts a menagerie of wildlife to its diverse habitats—size: 671 acres

A great watchable wildlife site



beaver

Bill Banaszewski

The rich mix of forest, wetland, meadow and open water at this nature center in central New York attracts more than 200 species of birds, and nurtures more than 800 varieties of plants. The landscape is dominated by 200-acre Beaver Lake, a large, water-filled kettle hole created by the massive weight of a thawing glacier from the last ice age.

During spring and fall, Beaver Lake is a resting spot for thousands of migratory waterfowl. On its southern shore is a fen, where visitors can find cranberries and insect-eating plants such as sundew, pitcher plant and bladderwort.

Wildlife to Watch

As its name suggests, beavers can be seen here, and the wetlands created by the dams of these industrious mammals serve as habitat for mink, muskrats and many other plants and animals. Bald eagles, ospreys and double-crested cormorants search the waters for fish.



white-tailed deer

Susan Shafer

Gerry Lemmo



indigo bunting

As evening's shadows lengthen, bats swoop after flying insects while sharp-eyed great horned owls patiently wait for nighttime to begin hunting for prey.

In the warmer months, look for snapping and painted turtles in the bog, as well as great blue herons stalking fish and bullfrogs in shallow water. Belted kingfishers noisily make their presence known, too. Canada geese by the thousands assemble in spring and fall on their long migratory journeys.

Wary white-tailed deer roam forests and fields. Chattering chipmunks and squirrels share the woods with strutting wild turkeys. Chubby woodchucks pop up from meadows, and raccoons search shallow water for frogs and crayfish. All keep a wary eye out for roving coyotes and foxes.

The most colorful feathered denizen you may encounter is the brilliant blue of the male indigo bunting. These sparrow-size birds arrive in late spring from the Caribbean islands and breed through summer. They prefer brushy fields and forest margins to deep woods, so look for them there.

In the deep woods, listen for the loud knocking of a pileated woodpecker as it drills into a tree. These nearly crow-sized birds, with red crests, white stripes, white

Gerry Lemmo



mink

Gerry Lemmo



pileated woodpecker

underwings and undulating flight, are always a thrilling sight.

Beaver Lake Nature Center is just one of the more than 100 wildlife viewing sites described in the recently published *New York Wildlife Viewing Guide*. See www.NewYork-WatchableWildlife.org for how to obtain your copy.



Site Features

Notes: The nature center opens daily at 7:30 a.m., except on Thanksgiving and Christmas. Contact the center for closing times and fees. The grounds include an arboretum. Spotting scopes are available for use in the visitors center. Enjoy weekend guided walks.

Trails: More than nine miles of maintained walking trails cross gentle terrain and include an observation tower, overlook deck and observation blind. Several boardwalks, one nearly a mile long, take you for a close look at unique wetland flora and fauna. Paddle your canoe or kayak through a wetland on the west side of the lake for a great view of wildlife from the water.

Accessibility: Some features for people with disabilities, including trails and a visitors center.

Directions: The nature center is located just 15 minutes northwest of Syracuse, at 8477 E. Mud Lake Rd. in Baldwinsville. It is accessible via the NYS Thruway; exit 39 from the west and exit 40 from the east.

Contact: 315-638-2519
106 Lake Drive, Liverpool
<http://onondagacountyparks.com/beaver-lake-nature-center>

