Mill Pond Trail

Trail Heads
Guelph Ave.
Baldwin Dr.

Length
5.0 km

Parking
Baldwin Dr.
Entrance to Silverheights Trail off Guelph Ave.

Surface
Pavement, Stonedust and Woodchip (steep terrain)

Washroom
Not available at this location

GPS
Baldwin Dr.:
N43.440868, W80.308812

Guelph Ave.:
N43.447899, W80.315330

Nesting grounds for wide variety of birds
Take only pictures, leave only footprints
River and railway astride Hespeler neighbourhood

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River and railway astride Hespeler neighbourhood
A mill pond is a body of water used as a reservoir for a water powered mill. This mill pond is a natural body of water which feeds into the Forbes Creek; this in turn feeds into the Speed River which powered the textile business (Silknit) in Hespeler on the Speed River. The Mill Pond Trails provides about 5.0km of enjoyment around Forbes Creek, the new subdivision, and a natural green space.

One of the trailhead markers is placed here to join the Mill Pond Trails with the Silver-heights Trail across Guelph Avenue. You can start your journey here looking for the many birds and vegetation that are located here in the Forbes Creek watershed.

George Alex Forbes maintained a Wood Duck Sanctuary on his land of approximately 100 acres. It was established in the 1950's and up kept for over 25 years. This area is bounded by Guelph Avenue, Blackbridge Road and the CN Rail Tracks north of Highway #401, just east of Highway #24 and Guelph Avenue. It included a provincially significant wetland. The wetland had approximately 276 species of plants and 177 species of wildlife.

Alex Forbes kept the pond, adjacent to the converted barn turned office/observatory, open in the winter, by pumping in well water and aeration. He fed up to a ton of corn to the variety of ducks and birds each week. Mr. Forbes has also been credited with restoring the wood duck population in Southern Ontario, with the help of friends through breeding and nest-box construction.

Over the years, the Forbes Creek had been dammed at various locations which created barriers to fish migration. The Forbes Creek Subwatershed study recommended the removal of the barriers and re-establishment of a natural channel. The environmental rehabilitation of a downstream section of Forbes Creek was pursued in an effort to re-establish the natural habitat of the creek during the construction of the Mattamy subdivision. This has improved the natural setting for aquatic and other wildlife. It extends to the public trail system and provides a new area to appreciate nature close to home.

Trailhead marker is placed here to mark the entrance to the Mill Pond Neighbourhood Park, providing a play structure and a soccer field for all to enjoy. It also marks the entrance to the trail across Baldwin Drive. Watch for birdhouses along the trail.

The railway, now only used once per week is a key part in the success of building Hespeler Village.

Enjoy the views of the railway below, the Speed River beyond, and the East Hespeler neighbourhood peeking through the naturally forested area adjacent to the trail.

Watch your step. The steep slopes and wood chip surface maintain a natural landscape through the disturbed natural forest.

Trails leads out to Blackbridge Road and the historically significant single lane steel bridge.

One of the original nesting grounds where hundreds of different kinds of birds came to flock year round.