

This Week's Walk by Margeree Edwards

Selwyn Conservation Area: A Best Kept Secret

July 2, 2021

Selwyn is a beautiful winter location and also has summer trails and a great beach! Because some people have problems finding it, I will give some clear direction right up front. The Selwyn Conservation Area is located on the Birch Island Road off of Selwyn Road.

DIRECTIONS: If you start at the Riverview Park and Zoo on Water Street in Peterborough, go directly north on Carnegie Road which changes its name to Centre Line after a few miles. Pass over the 8th line at the intersection where the Selwyn Town Hall is and just keep going north, up and down the hills, and over a few cross - roads until you come to Selwyn Road. Turn Right and after 2 1/2 km keep a sharp eye for a sign on the right side of the road that says Selwyn Conservation Area. Turn LEFT onto Birch Island Road.

Follow Birch Island Road to the end (a T intersection) and turn RIGHT to the entrance to the park.

At the entrance you have three choices

(1) On the right is a good path leading to a 6 km trail which has a cutout to the left for a shorter trail about 3km.

The trails are lovely for walking with several different varieties of plants and trees and meadows. Both trails will take you to the beach at the end. Sorry to sound a bit vague but maps and signs are not available.

(2) The next road to the left at the entrance is the main access for vehicles to beach parking. There is a 5-10 minute walk from the parking lot to the beach. The road to the boat launch and its parking area are also along this road.

(3) The third entrance starts near the base of the road that goes to the beach. Look for two big rocks and a sign - a large blue S on a white background. Follow that trail to the boat launch, cross the road and see a sign on a tree that says "Trail" (These are people of few words). Stay on that trail, the one that always has the closest view of the lake. It is an interesting route; tall skinny trees, it is almost spooky. Stay left and you will come to a junction with the trail that runs from the beach parking lot to the beach .

THE BEACH

Selwyn is a typical country beach. There are few amenities. There are some picnic tables and washrooms, but no food to buy or water, you bring your own. There is lots of room to swim but you will sometimes feel the tickle of weeds. It is worth the longer drive from Peterborough.

One day, a friend and I decided to beat the heat and go for an early morning walk and swim. It was amazing, the lake was perfectly still and reflected the trees on the far shore. It was magical just to swim out and float with no one else there. We could not believe that other people had not come. It felt like we owned the whole beach. During a trip to shore, I looked at my watch and asked my friend, "Do you think more people aren't here because it is still only 8:30 in the morning?" Suddenly, as if a bell had just rung, people began to arrive.

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