

The Trails

From Saranac Ave. (Rt. 86), turn onto Peninsula Way, which starts between the Comfort Inn and the Howard Johnson's Restaurant. Follow this road 0.4 miles to a small parking area at a gate on the left. In 250 yards from the gate the old dirt road crosses the Boundary Trail and reaches a clearing at 0.4 miles where the Ridge and Lakeshore Trails diverge. Now narrower, the road continues for another 0.3 miles to its end.

Lakeshore Trail - (Blue Markers) 0.8 mi. loop - From the clearing, go left and down 70 yards to a junction with the Boundary Trail. Turn right and follow along the shoreline, noting the variety of trees, shrubs, flowers, mosses, and ferns

that are found in this low moist area. Swinging away from the lake, the trail joins the old road to return to the clearing.

Ridge Trail - (Yellow Markers) 1.3 mi. loop - From the clearing go right and gently up to a junction with the Boundary Trail in 0.25 miles. Turning left and covering higher and drier ground, this trail winds through lands selectively cut for saw logs in the 40's. Hardwoods (beech, birch, and maple) predominate with occasional hemlock, balsam fir, and poplar. One mile from the clearing, the trail descends to a junction with the old road to return to the clearing.

Boundary Trail - (Red Markers) 0.9 mi. loop - Start is the same as for the Lakeshore Trail, but turn left at the junction 70 yards from the clearing. In another 100 yards the trail comes to a junction with the Jackrabbit Trail at the end of the bridge below the SOA Dam. Turning left (do not cross the bridge), the Boundary/Jackrabbit Trail crosses a boardwalk and comes to a junction at 0.4 miles from the clearing. Going left, the **Boundary Trail** crosses the old road, continues to a junction with the Ridge Trail at 0.65 miles, and turns left to return to the clearing.

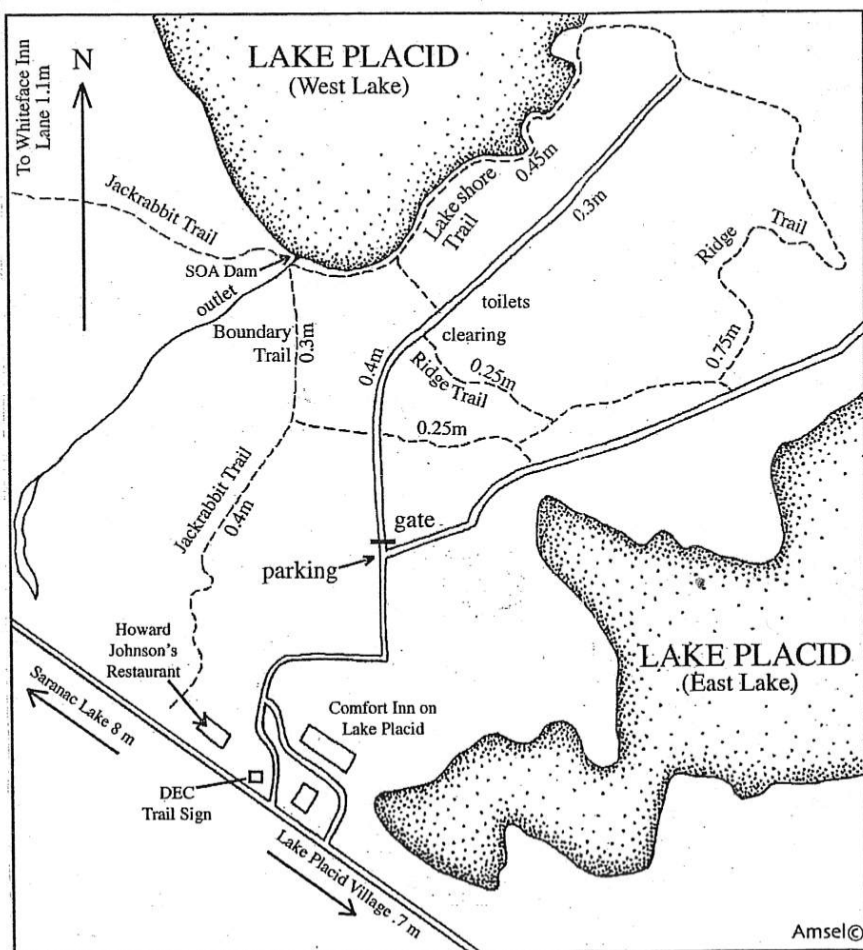
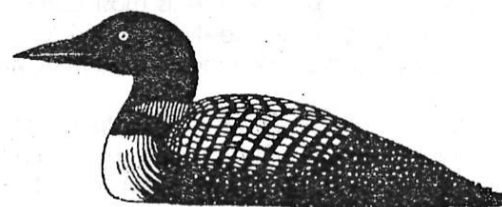
Constructed and maintained by the Adirondack Ski Touring Council, the **Jackrabbit Trail** connects Whiteface Inn Lane with Saranac Avenue at the Howard Johnson's Restaurant. Crossing the bridge at the SOA Dam leads in 1.1 miles to Whiteface Inn Lane where the **Jackrabbit Trail** continues another 7.5 miles to Saranac Lake. Heading toward Saranac Avenue, the **Jackrabbit Trail** follows the Boundary Trail for 0.25 miles and then goes straight for another 0.4 miles to Saranac Avenue.

The Adirondacks comprise some of the oldest recognized rock formations on earth. The metamorphic rocks which are visible today were carved to their present configuration by glacial activity, which occurred over a span of a million years. The last glaciers disappeared 12,000 years ago leaving the rugged Adirondack Mountains and many beautiful lakes such as Lake Placid.

The Brewster Peninsula trails are situated on a parcel of 133 acres of land purchased by New York State in 1960. The area was logged over during the 1940s, except for a 200' wide strip of undisturbed forest along the lake shore.

As you walk along these trails, you are observing a moment of time in the forest, with plant and animal associations governed by the laws of biological succession. Both nature and people can be great disturbers of the realm through floods, fire, storms, disease, cutting and industrial emissions. No matter how severe the attack, the eternal process of healing, however slow, will continue.

If you walk quietly, look and listen intently, you may see or hear birds or wild animals living on the Brewster Peninsula. Resident mammals include snowshoe hares, squirrels, chipmunks, mink, muskrat, moles, and shrews. Whether your trip is for information or relaxation, HAVE FUN!



The Peninsula Nature Trails

Lake Placid
New York



Self-Guiding Pamphlet

THE GARDEN CLUB OF LAKE PLACID
with help from
Adirondack Ski Touring Council
and
New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

In 2002, the Lake Placid Garden Club placed 14 interpretive panels along the old road and the Lakeshore Trail to assist in your understanding of the forces at work in these woods. Also along this loop are numbers on representative trees and letters at other sites identified in this brochure.

Trees

1. **Northern White Cedar or Arborvitae** (*Thuja occidentalis*) - sprouts from shallow roots to about 40' high. Paired, scale-like leaves on twigs grow in flat, lacy sprays. Crushed needles and twigs are aromatic and were used by Native Americans as poultice to reduce swelling. Tea brewed from leaves was believed to cure scurvy and coughs and is rich in vitamin C. Soft and light in weight, the coarse-grained wood is good for fence posts and shingles because of its resistance to rot. Deer and rabbits find refuge and food in dense thickets of this tree.

2. **Eastern Hemlock** (*Tsuga canadensis*) - has a dark, furrowed trunk often with purplish tones in the bark. Short, flat needles on delicate, feathery branches and small, pendant cones distinguish this conifer. Known to live over 900 years, the bark was the primary source of tannin in the 19th century.

3. **Balsam Fir** (*Abies balsamea*) smells and looks like a Christmas tree and is often used for that purpose. Each needle is flattened, blunt at tip and bears two white lines underneath. Needles make fragrant pillows. Bark of the young tree is smooth, broken by blisters of fragrant resin or balsam. Resin has been used as optical cement and for mounting microscopic specimens. Mature trees may be furrowed or ridged.

4. **Red Spruce** (*Picea rubens*) tapers upward to a point and has short, prickly needles. Spruces have needles that are square in cross-section, not flattened like those of firs and hemlocks. Red spruce needles tend to be yellow-green. Reddish cones hang down and can measure up to 2" long. The decline of red spruce in the 1970's alerted scientists to the potential environmental consequences of acid rain.

5. **Yellow Birch** (*Betula alleghaniensis*) has silvery-gray to yellowish bark which peels in narrow, horizontal, curly ribbons. Older trees have furrowed bark that is coarse and scaly. Bark and twigs have slight

wintergreen flavor. The 3- 4" long leaves are nearly oval, pointed and doubly saw-toothed. Paler under-surface is often hairy along veins. Yellow birch is good for furniture, woodenware, better plywood and firewood.

6. **Eastern White Pine** (*pinus strobus*) was used as early as the 17th century for ships' masts. This tall, straight conifer, which grows throughout the world is prized for its light, soft wood that has a wide range of uses. Branches grow from the trunk like spokes from a hub. Needles cluster in groups of 5. Long, narrow cones curve slightly and take two years to mature. According to legend, Algonquin Indians starved for winter food survived by eating the inner bark of pines which contains sugar. The Iroquois poked fun at their lack of hunting ability, calling the Algonquins *Haitrongtaks*, meaning 'they who eat trees'. This is one explanation for the origin of the name of our Adirondack region.

7. **Sugar Maple** (*Acer saccharum*) is the official state tree of New York providing us with maple syrup and high grade wood. The wood is tough and durable and sometimes has satiny 'curly' or 'bird's eye' patterns on its surface. We walk, dance and bowl on maple flooring and admire maple in furniture, cabinets, and harps. Smooth, gray bark on young trees matures into furrowed surface. Potential life span of 200-350 years far exceeds that of our other maple species.

8. **Red Maple** (*Acer rubrum*) keeps a red hue in all seasons. Red buds open and clusters of red or red and yellow flowers hang from reddish twigs. Reddish tint remains in leaf stalk until entire leaf turns scarlet in autumn. Red maple aggressively invades open ground, can tolerate shade and grows mainly in wet places. Paired seeds or 'helicopters' spiral to the ground and germinate in late spring.

9. **Striped Maple** (*Acer pensylvanicum*) is a slender tree rarely growing taller than 25-30' which can form a dense under-story. Smooth green bark with vertical white stripes give this tree its most common name. Resembling goose feet, broad, 3-lobed leaves account for the nickname of **Goosefoot Maple**.

10. **White Birch or Paper Birch** (*Betula papyrifera*) has white bark marked with horizontal lines (lenticels). Bark peels in broad strips. Saplings start off reddish-

brown then turn to white as they mature. Native Americans covered canoes with the bark and also used it to make baskets, dishes, and trays. Tolerant of poor soil and quick to cover burned areas, it is also known as **Poverty Birch**. Oval leaves are blunt-pointed and coarsely serrated.

11. **Quaking Aspen** (*Populus tremuloides*) is the smallest of the poplars with leaves which alternate on stem and flower buds resembling pussy willows. Long, flattened leaf stalks allow the leaves to tremble and rustle in the slightest breeze. Each leaf has tiny teeth along its margins. Grows best in bright sunlight and furnishes shade that allows growth of hardwoods such as maple, ash, and beech. Bark is a favorite food of beavers, who also use branches and twigs for their dams. Grouse eat winter buds, hares dine on twigs, and porcupines browse the leaves which turn golden-yellow in the fall.

Other Plants/Shrubs/Site

A. **Lake Placid** is mountain stream fed with clear water. Water source for Lake Placid Village. Fish abound in this 5-mile long lake with over 12 miles of shoreline. You are on a small bay on the west shore of Brewster Peninsula.

B. **Trillium** (*Trillium spp*) has three broad leaves and three showy petals. White or red flowers (2-4") in May/June are followed by large red berries.

C. **American Yew** (*Taxus canadensis*) is low shrub, 2-3' tall, which grows in clumps with spreading branches. Although poisonous to people, deer browse it heavily, leaving telltale frayed ends on bitten-off twigs.

D. **Wood Sorrel** (*Oxalis montana*) has leaves divided into three inversely heart-shaped leaflets jointed at stem. Delicate, 5-petaled flowers close at night. Found only in Canada and the northern edge of the U.S. Most common herb of spruce-fir forest since its shade and acid tolerant. Mats of leaves without flowers often seen in woods.

E. **Witch-Hobble or Hobblebush** (*Viburnum alnifolium*) is irregular shrub 3-8' high and favorite deer browse. Straggling branches sometimes droop to ground and take root, forming loops that

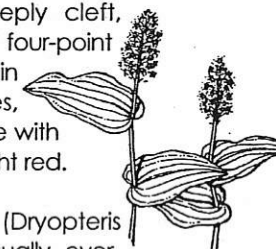


may **hobble** even a wandering **witch!** Showy, white flower clusters announce spring has finally come to Lake Placid. Blue-black berries herald fall.

F. **Blueberry** (*Vaccinium spp*) is low to medium sized shrub with inch long leaves, tiny bell-like white flowers, and small round fruits sought after by humans, bears and other wildlife.

G. **Mosses** - There are several varieties of mosses on the ground in front of you. Mosses grow on soil, rocks, or tree bark. One species found here is the **pin cushion moss**.

H. **Canada Mayflower or Wild Lily-of-the-Valley** (*Maianthemum canadense*) usually has two or three leaves. Note deeply cleft, heart-shaped bases and four-point flowers which combine in feathery cluster. Berries, prized by birds, are white with spots, later turning to bright red.



I. **Evergreen Woodfern** (*Dryopteris spinulosa*) is lacy-cut, usually evergreen, and commonly used by florists as "fancy ferns".

J. **Sphagnum Moss** (*Sphagnum spp*) is one of more than 300 species of peat mosses of cool temperature regions. Very absorptive and can hold vast amounts of water. Helps keep soil moist.

K. **Shelf-fungus** - Note that this tree has numerous shelf-fungi encircling it. These simple plants play an important role as decomposers in the balance of nature; fungi and bacteria break down organic compounds when plants and animals die and return them to the soil.

L. **Sensitive Fern** (*Onoclea sensibilis*) is sturdy with broad almost triangular leaves, which tilt upward and backward. Prominent network-forming veins identify this fern which dies after first frost, leaving only the erect, beadlike fertile spike.

M. **Speckled Alder** (*Alnus rugosa*) is shrub of 10-15' high found in poorly drained sites. Related to birch, alder has horizontal lines (lenticels) on trunk which allow living tissue in trunk to 'breathe'. Forms dense thickets.