



# BURLINGTON'S ULTIMATE HIKING GUIDE



Reconnect  
Burlington



## Welcome to **Reconnect Burlington!**

We're thrilled to have you join our growing Reconnect community, where dynamic connections and experiences await. To express our gratitude, we've designed this exclusive hiking guide just for you! Discover Burlington's hidden gems and family-friendly outdoor adventures.

Best of all, this is just the beginning! At Reconnect Burlington, we are dedicated to connecting you to exciting local events, nature, and your neighbours. Visit [reconnectburlington.ca](https://reconnectburlington.ca) to see an interactive map of events happening in our city. Contact me to learn about the exciting events I am planning and for ways you can get involved in the Reconnect experience.

*Let the adventure begin!*



Sincerely,

**Kale**

[kale@ReconnectBurlington.ca](mailto:kale@ReconnectBurlington.ca)

Reconnect Burlington is a project of:



## Types of Trails in Burlington

We have such a beautiful mix of waterfront paths, lush forests, and scenic Escarpment views right in our backyard! Whether you are looking for a peaceful stroll, an escape from city life, or for a challenging hike, Burlington has the perfect spot for everyone! Our hiking trails can be enjoyed all year long and highlight Burlington's natural beauty in each season —vibrant fall colours, crisp winter hikes, fresh spring blossoms, and the warmth of summer strolls. So grab a friend (or a pup!), put on your hiking boots, and start exploring!!

Types of trails include:

- **Multi-Use Paths:** These paths often wind through subdivisions, with both paved and unpaved sections. They are designed for pedestrians, in-line skaters, and cyclists.
- **Bike Lanes:** Dedicated portions of the road surface exclusively for bicycle use, ensuring bikers can safely share the paths with pedestrians.
- **Forested Trails:** Created in parks and conservation areas, these trails allow safe travel through forests and around bodies of water while protecting the surrounding wildlife.





# Enhance Your Hiking Experience with Apps

How can you bring your experience in the outdoors to life and connect more to the plants and animals around you?

Here are my recommendations for some great apps I always have on the go:



## Merlin Bird ID app

Hear a bird chirping or cawing and don't know who the sound belongs to? Pull out this app and record what you hear. The app will identify the birds around you and play sounds to learn about different communication patterns. It also offers a photo ID feature that scans your image and offers potential matches.



## Geocache

Find hidden treasures along your walk by following clues in this app! You can also create a cache of your own to hide in your community. Most caches have a logbook that you can sign and see who else found it before you. They can be large and hidden in logs or "micro" and disguised on park signs. Whichever you decide, geocaching is sure to add some fun to your next walk.



## iNaturalist

Walking by a new plant or animal you haven't seen before? Upload a photo of it on this app to contribute to citizen science by identifying it from a list of recommended species. Your observation will be confirmed by scientists and naturalists worldwide, and you are supporting scientific data collection!



## All Trails

This app is great for finding new trails near you, wherever you are. If you find yourself already on a trail, you can measure the speed of your hike and track your route so you can safely make your way back to your starting point. This app features a collection of reviews, recommendations, and terrain details — there is always something new to explore!



Need

## A hiking buddy?

**The best way to maintain your new hobby is to surround yourself with people who love the same activity!**

To help you get started, I found some hiking groups in Burlington you can join for outdoor adventures:

1. The Iroquoia Bruce Trail club: It is one of Bruce Trail's Chapters and is responsible for maintaining the Iroquoia section. Check out their calendar, where they post their organized hikes led by experienced volunteers.
2. Burloak Walk 'n Talk: A group of ladies aged 50+ decided to form this group to stay active. They meet weekly at Burloak Park and monthly around Halton. The purpose is to stay active and socially connected!
3. Burlington Women Walking: Another Network of women of all ages who are committed to active living. Join their group to learn more!
4. Halton Hikers: A great group that was initially formed on Facebook during the pandemic (2021), and now they have more than 7000 members. They are ready to share their experience and organize hikes together.
5. Halton Outdoor Club: This club offers a wider variety of outdoor activities in addition to hiking, such as snowshoeing, skiing, kayaking, and cycling. Check out its variety of services as well!
6. Dogs of Burlington: Here's a special one for folks with their four-legged furry companions! The group offers a platform for members to plan group walks, among other things.



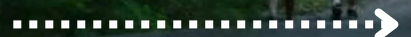


# Our Trail Recommendations

**Here are our top recommendations for trails to visit.  
Have you explored any of these before?**

Disclaimer: Neither Environmental Defence Canada nor Burlington Green are responsible for the safety of hikers or anyone following this guide.

Environmental Defence Canada and Burlington Green are not responsible for any errors or omissions in this guide. Trail information is subject to change.





# My Trail Recommendations

## Bruce Trail - Iroquoia Section



Photo: [Insidehalton.com](https://www.insidehalton.com)

An amazing fact about the Bruce Trail: it is the oldest and longest marked trail in Canada! The Iroquoia section, in Burlington, contains several trails, and I've chosen for you one of my favourites, the **Kerncliff Park & Ian Reid Side Trail** for you to explore! This hidden gem, with its diverse landscapes, showcase the wonders we can achieve with restoration efforts! The City of Burlington has done an amazing job transforming the Nelson Quarry into Kerncliff Park since 1981.

Look over the sides of the boardwalk path into the shallow waters, you can often see basking Midland Painted Turtles of all ages and sizes!

📍 **Address:** [Burlington, Ontario L8B 0W6](#)

🚶 **Trail Length:** 3.2 km, loop

👤 **Difficulty:** Easy

♿ **Accessibility:** Some areas, including the boardwalk, are accessible and suitable for wheelchairs, strollers and other mobility devices, such as canes and walkers

🌿 **Features:** Forest and wildlife with some creeks. Good for birding, running, hiking, snowshoeing

💰 **Cost:** Free

🚲 **Bike:** Yes, mountain biking

P **Parking:** Yes, free

🚌 **Transit:** No



**Did you know?** Quarries don't just affect the immediate area—they can have wider impacts too. They can release harmful substances and affect our air and water quality. That's why some of our neighbours near Mount Nemo are working hard to stop another quarry from expanding.











# My Trail Recommendations

## Spencer Smith Park - Waterfront Trail



Photo: [Zeusthecockapoo](#)

This highly popular trail, which links Burlington to Hamilton through the lake, is absolutely mesmerizing. You will love the scenic views of beautiful Lake Ontario! Immerse yourself in this vibrant and lively trail, and let it inspire you with the countless memories you can create—whether visiting year-round or during festive seasons.

-  **Address:** [Waterfront Trail, Burlington, ON L7S 1Y2](#)
- Trail Length:** 22 km, out and back
-  **Difficulty:** Moderate
-  **Accessibility:** Mostly accessible—motorized wheelchairs may be needed for the unpaved sections
-  **Features:** Beaches, historic sites, wildlife, wonderful views
-  **Cost:** Free
-  **Bike:** Yes
-  **Parking:** [Yes](#)
-  **Transit:** Yes, e.g., 10 East to Appleby Go, 50 to Burloak





# My Trail Recommendations






## Royal Botanical Gardens Trails







Photo: Vince Chen on All trails

Do you enjoy a learning experience while hiking? Check out the [Anishinaabe Waadiziwin and Grey Doe Loop](#). You'll enjoy discovering native plants and learning how the Indigenous peoples used them to meet life's essential needs. It's a hike filled with knowledge and wonder, with a certain beauty that changes with each season!

Once you have paid for RBG parking, you have access to their trails and the entire Arboretum. Plan a picnic and make a day out of it!

-  **Address:** [Waterdown, Ontario L9H 5Y6](#)
-  **Trail Length:** 3.4 km, loop
-  **Difficulty:** Easy
-  **Accessibility:** No
-  **Features:** Forests, views, lake, wildlife

-  **Cost:** Yes
-  **Bike:** No
-  **Parking:** [Yes](#)
-  **Transit:** Closest is 1 West to Hamilton



**Did you know?** [Around 40% of modern pharmaceutical products](#) are derived from traditional knowledge, such as the malaria drug treatment and childhood cancer treatments. In Canada, [15% of medicinal plants](#) are endangered or are in critical condition due to climate shifts and the growing demand for plant-derived natural health products. It's a reminder of how important it is to protect our natural resources!



# My Trail Recommendations










## Hidden Valley Trail



Photo: Nico Christodoulou on All Trails

You can find a serene escape where Grindstone Creek meanders through the lush greenery of the valley. This trail truly feels like a hidden gem tucked away from the busy city, with lots of towering, healthy trees, fresh running water, a playground for kids, and access to the facilities at Hidden Valley Park. These trails also connect to the beautiful marshes of the Royal Botanical Gardens.

Enjoy this trail with family, friends, and furry companions. It's a great place to recharge for yet another busy week ahead!

-  **Address:** 1137 Hidden Valley Rd, Burlington, ON L7P 0T7
-  **Trail Length:** 5.5 km, out and back
-  **Difficulty:** Easy
-  **Accessibility:** Yes, except for the bridge at the end
-  **Features:** Rivers, forests, wildlife, and lake
-  **Cost:** Free
-  **Bike:** Prohibited in areas managed by the Royal Botanical Gardens
-  **Parking:** Yes
-  **Transit:** Yes, 1 West to Hamilton



# My Trail Recommendations

## Centennial Trail - Across Burlington



Photo: Monique Morel-Desrosiers on All trails

Are you interested in getting some extra steps in or cycling while staying in the heart of Burlington? This easy trail is for you! Although the sounds of nature are an excellent soundtrack, you could enjoy this trail while listening to your favourite podcast! This is also a great trail for getting around the city to run some errands.

**📍 Address:** Starts at [Pearl St](#) - South West Burlington and ends at [West of Burloak Dr](#). Many entry points along the road

**📏 Trail Length:** 15.6 km, out and back

**🚶 Difficulty:** Easy

**♿ Accessibility:** Yes

**🌿 Features:** City walks, wildlife, forests, fully paved

**💰 Cost:** Free

**🚲 Bike:** Yes

**P Parking:** [Yes](#)

**🚌 Transit:** Yes, it crosses multiple roads in Burlington, running from southwest to northeast, with access to public transit



**Did you Know?** [By intentionally choosing active transportation](#), such as walking or biking, you are significantly reducing your risk of developing chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, or cancer. Here's a neighbourly reminder to increase your physical activity during your daily routine.












# My Trail Recommendations

## Paletta Park Loop



Photo: Nico Christodoulou on All Trails

This picturesque lakefront park offers the tranquility you need after a challenging workday! Don't succumb to the urge to stay home, step outside and enjoy this small loop trail with its panoramic views. You'll thank me later!

-  **Address:** [4218 Lakeshore Rd., Burlington, ON L7L 1E2](#)
-  **Trail Length:** 1.3 km, loop
-  **Difficulty:** Easy
-  **Accessibility:** Yes
-  **Features:** Beaches, wildlife, lake
-  **Cost:** Free
-  **Bike:** Yes
-  **Parking:** [Yes](#)
-  **Transit:** Closest is 10 East to Appleby GO














## My Trail Recommendations

### Twelve Mile and Bronte Creek Trail



Photo: Rishona Vemulapalli on All Trails

Are you looking for an activity-packed day outdoors? This trail offers diverse landscapes, while Bronte Creek Provincial Park offers many additional recreational activities for you to enjoy! Whether you're looking for a peaceful stroll, a spot for birdwatching, a place to relax by the water, or even a visit to Bronte Park's petting zoo, this is your go-to destination.

-  **Address:** Twelve Mile Trail, Burlington, ON L7L 0J6
-  **Trail Length:** 11.3 km, out and back
-  **Difficulty:** Moderate
-  **Accessibility:** No
-  **Features:** River, wildlife, historic sites, wildflowers
-  **Cost:** Yes
-  **Bike:** Not entirely—the loop at the end of the trail is not accessible by bike
-  **Parking:** Not on the Twelve Mile side but there is paid parking available at Bronte Creek Park
-  **Transit:** Yes, LW Aldershot Go, 11 South to Appleby GO, or Oakville GO via Dundas



## My Trail Recommendations

### Mount Nemo Conservation Area (multiple trails)



Photo: Rachel Jones

If you aren't weary of heights, the views from these trails are world-class. We are so lucky to have the escarpment in our backyard as it is one of Canada's natural wonders and a UN protected world biosphere!

The rocky Mount Nemo has more than seven trails, ranging from easy to moderate in difficulty. I recommend Bruce Trail - Mount Nemo to Kilbride. This trail is the longest among the seven, it is a crowd-pleaser and offers the best and most show-stopping views around!


 **Address:** Burlington, ON L7P 0A5

 **Trail Length:** 14 km, out and back

 **Difficulty:** Moderate

 **Accessibility:** Only about 2kms of these trails are paved & accessible

 **Features:** Kid-friendly, dogs on leash, hiking, running, road biking, forests, city walks, wildflowers

 **Cost:** Yes, when entering Mount Nemo. It is cheaper if you reserve online.

 **Bike:** Yes

 **Parking:** Yes

 **Transit:** No



**Did you know?** Our beloved Niagara Escarpment is facing continuous human-led threats, including urban sprawl, resource-depleting invasive species and the weakening of policies protecting the escarpment.





# Hiking Etiquette

Did you know that there are “unspoken” rules to follow when hiking in nature? Following them ensures that you are respecting nature and other guests.

Here are my top tips:

- **Follow the trailblazes:** You may have noticed different coloured rectangles painted on tree trunks. These are important markers that will guide you to stay on the trail!
- **Observe park signage:** Trail signs provide important information about the route, including directions, distances, and points of interest.



- **Respect wildlife:** Avoid disturbing wildlife. Observe from a distance and do not feed animals. Sticking to designated paths helps protect plants and ecosystems.
- **Leave what you find behind:** Do not pick plants, disturb wildlife, or remove rocks or historical artifacts. Leave natural and cultural features as you found them for others to enjoy.

- **Dispose of waste properly:** Pack out all trash, litter, and leftover food. Do not leave anything behind. Use designated waste disposal facilities or carry a trash bag to pack out your garbage.



# Explore in the Winter

Winter doesn't mean that we need to hide from the outdoors! It doesn't mean we need expensive sports gear either. There are plenty of ways that we can connect with the nature during this time:

- **Birding:** With the leaves gone on the trees, the birds that live in our community are much easier to spot! Use Merlin Bird ID or other apps to identify them based on their calls or appearance.
- **Tracking:** See who shares your habitat! When there is snow on the ground, it is a great chance to discover who shares our backyard or trails with us. In the summer, we might not know whether a mole or owl crossed our path just moments before, but in the winter they often leave behind identifiable tracks in the snow.

## WINTER WILDLIFE

### Who's been visiting your neighbourhood?

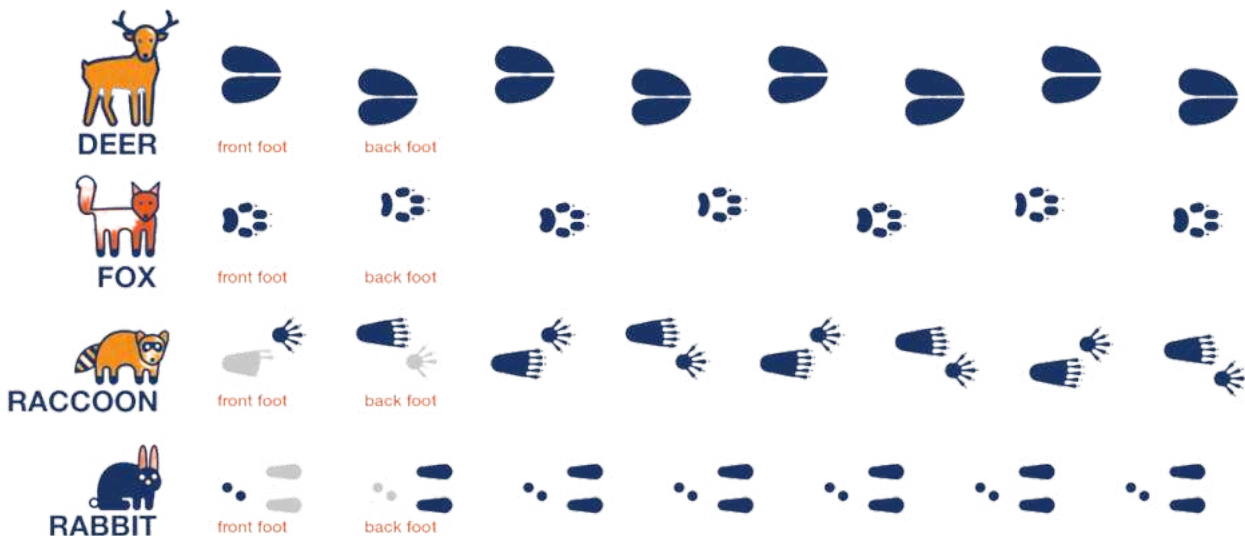


Photo credit: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry





## Explore in the **Winter** (Continued)

- **Winter Art:** There are fun ways to make art in the snow and ice. Whether it's a snowman, igloo, or snow angel, you can elevate your experience by adding “spray paint!”

### **Steps:**

- Fill spray bottles with water and just a dash of alcohol to prevent freezing
- Add drops of food colouring or create your colours with vegetables like beets
- Take your spray bottles outside and begin spraying in the snow



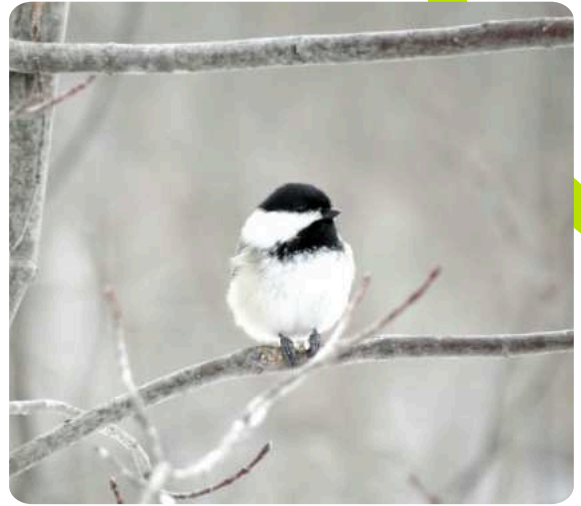
**Photo credit:** <https://www.thebestideasforkids.com/snow-paint/>

- **Dress well:** We need to prepare for Mother Nature and, by that, we mean layer up! Many people cut their fun outdoor experiences short when they are underdressed for the cold. If possible, investing in quality winter gear can protect you from wind and freezing temperatures, but having many warm layers covering your feet, hands, and face, works just as well. Winter boots are a must. Ensure your face is moisturized with a thick lotion to protect skin from the wind too!

## What are the Animals Up To?

Hiking throughout the year allows you to witness and appreciate the changing seasons, from the vibrant colours of fall foliage to the quiet beauty of snow-covered landscapes.

Observing wildlife can also add a special dimension to your hiking experience in different seasons.



### Spring

- Many bird species migrate during spring. Look for flocks of birds travelling to their breeding grounds.
- Spring is a time when many animals, such as birds and mammals, engage in nesting behaviours. Keep an eye out for nests in trees and on the ground.
- Reptile and Amphibian Activity: Warmer temperatures in spring may encourage reptiles and amphibians, like snakes and salamanders, to become more active.

### Summer

- Many bird species are actively vocalizing to attract mates or establish territories—listen to their songs!
- Summer is peak insect season. You may see butterflies, bees, and other pollinators, as well as spiders and other incredible insects.
- Some mammals give birth in summer, so you may come across some young animals.

### Fall

- Prime time to view bird migrations as they head south for the winter.
- Many animals start preparing for winter by foraging and storing food. For example, squirrels may be actively collecting and burying nuts.

### Winter

- Snow provides an excellent canvas for wildlife tracks. Look for signs of animals like deer, rabbits, foxes, mice, and birds.
- Some mammals, such as certain rodents, change their fur color in winter to blend in with the snowy surroundings—can you spot them?
- Many birds choose to stay right here in Burlington all winter long. Take some binoculars and see what species you can find.



**Did you know** that climate change is making Ontario winters much warmer and wetter? Unfortunately, this is good news for ticks who thrive in these conditions. Be sure to do a “tick check” with your friends and family after you’ve enjoyed the great outdoors!





# Hiking Bingo

Transform your hike into an engaging scavenger hunt, making every trail more exciting!

<b>SQUIRREL</b> 	<b>BIRD HOUSE</b> 	<b>GUST OF WIND</b> 	<b>POLLINATOR</b> 	<b>DOG WALKER</b> 
<b>MAPLE LEAF</b> 	<b>BIRDS NEST</b> 	<b>ANIMAL BURROW</b> 	<b>TRAIL MARKER</b> 	<b>PINE CONE</b> 
<b>CONIFEROUS TREE</b> 	<b>MUSHROOMS</b> 	<b>FREE SPACE</b>	<b>FLOCK OF BIRDS</b> 	<b>OAK LEAF</b> 
<b>ACORN</b> 	<b>BIRD HOUSE</b> 	<b>THE SUN</b> 	<b>HOLE IN TREE</b> 	<b>BERRIES</b> 
<b>ANIMAL TRACKS</b> 	<b>Y-SHAPED TWIG</b> 	<b>BIRD CALL</b> 	<b>RABBIT</b> 	<b>BIG ROCK</b> 



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[ReconnectBurlington.ca](https://ReconnectBurlington.ca)

## Before You Go... Here are My Quick Tips

- In colder weather, wear layers to trap and retain body heat. While in warmer conditions, choose lightweight and breathable fabrics to stay cool.
- In conditions of low visibility, wearing bright or reflective clothing enhances your visibility, reducing the risk of accidents.
- Hiking boots help prevent slips and give great ankle support on rugged terrain.
- Protect yourself from UV rays all year round. Wearing non-toxic sunscreen, a hat, and long sleeves helps prevent sunburns and long-term skin damage.
- Stay hydrated—carry a reusable water bottle or a water bladder.
- Bring snacks to sustain your energy levels throughout the hike.
- Some trails may be closed or have limited accessibility in winter. Check with local authorities or park services for trail conditions.
- Always check the time of sunset so you can plan when you should stop hiking and make your way back home.
- Stay safe. Let someone know where you've gone and when you expect to be back home.
- Have fun!

## Until Next Time

Connect with me, Kale, for more things to do in Burlington. Send a photo of your trail experience—I'd love to see it, and it just might be featured in our next newsletter! 😊

*See you on the trails!*

