

The ADVENTURE STARTS HERE!

The **Spencer Adventure** is more than a trip through nature... it's a journey through time! Your journey will take you back 450 million years to the time when the Niagara Escarpment was beginning to form, through the last ice age when the melting, mile-high glaciers began to carve out the Escarpment, to the area's earliest settlers and right through to your journey today!

Follow the **Spencer Adventure Trail** along the Spencer Creek through one of Upper Canada's earliest industrial communities. From Christie Lake Conservation Area to the Dundas Peak, explore historic mills and dams, waterfalls, incredible vista view points along the Niagara Escarpment and discover the unique history, geology and ecology of the area.

The **Spencer Gorge** is significant in Ontario for its gorge and its rare and diverse variety of plants and animals. It is part of the **Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere**. This distinctive gorge is a Y-shaped bedrock gorge with two very scenic waterfalls: **Webster Falls** was created by the main trunk of the Spencer Creek; and **Tew Falls** was formed by Logie's Creek.

The falls flow over bowl-shaped rock formations; the most recent and smallest of a series of bowl-shaped basins in the Spencer Gorge. Over the past 12,000 years, erosion from ancient waterfalls has caused these formations. The widening of the gorge downstream suggests the falls at one time was as large as the Horseshoe Falls in Niagara.



CHRISTIE LAKE

Christie Lake Conservation Area offers a world of natural wonders, just waiting to be discovered. Walk 10 kilometers of trails that wind through peaceful meadows, forests, wetlands and stroll along the lake. Ride the single or double track mountain bike trails, play a round of disk golf on the championship course or relax on the sandy beach. Christie Lake is the perfect spot to pack a picnic and enjoy the great outdoors no matter the size of your group. Your Spencer Adventure takes you along the reservoir and across the road to the Christie Wildlife Area where the Adventure Trail ends.

CROOKS HOLLOW

The Crooks Hollow Conservation Area opened in 1969 as a reservoir with a historical trail following the Spencer Creek through the historic village of Crooks' Hollow. The dam which created the reservoir was constructed in 1916 for the purpose of supplying water to the community of Dundas, then later, between 1959 and 2001, the Dundas Valley Golf and Curling Club. The reservoir and surrounding lands were used for recreation including hiking, fishing and limited boating. Over the years, the dam became unsafe. Since the reservoir was no longer a water supply and the dam a risk to public safety, the dam was removed along with years of contaminated sediment build-up. The creek was restored to its original condition and is now a flourishing ecosystem. The remains of the old dam now serve as a lookout accessed from the bridge over Spencer Creek. From there you can view a new waterfall created by the removal of the dam.

SHARE THE TRAIL

The trail system is open to hikers, dog-walkers, joggers, cyclists, and cross-country skiers. Enjoyment and safety among such a diverse group begins with every individual. **Being cautious and courteous helps ensure a great trail experience for everyone.**

Note: Because of rugged terrain, some Spencer Gorge trails have limited accessibility.

HCA Trail Etiquette

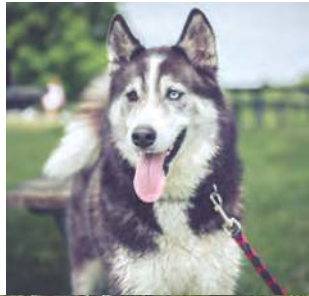
- Stay on marked designated trails. There are many rare and sensitive plants that can be easily damaged or destroyed.
- Respect and share the trail with other users.
- Watch for and obey all trail closure signs.
- Respect neighbouring landowners by staying off private property, maintaining privacy for landowners and avoiding excessive noise.
- Bicycles are not permitted on the Bruce Trail
- Alcohol is not permitted at any time.
- Pack out what you pack in. Please leave our natural areas clean.
- The Niagara Escarpment is full of wonders, but can also be dangerous. To enjoy this area safely, please stay on marked trails and behind all fences and barriers. Keep children within arm's reach and away from cliff and escarpment edges.

BRUCE TRAIL

The Bruce Trail is Canada's oldest and longest marked footpath. Running along the Niagara Escarpment in Southern Ontario, it spans more than 885 km of main trail and 400 km of associate side trails. The Bruce Trail Conservancy is also one of Ontario's largest land trusts, preserving nearly 10,000 acres of Niagara Escarpment landscape. For more information about the Bruce Trail visit: brucetrail.org

PETS

Conservation Authority regulations require dogs to be on leash at all times and cannot be left unattended. Remove dog waste from the trail and dispose of it in the garbage.



GREENSVILLE OPTIMISTS CLUB

The Greensville Community Optimists Park, which adjoins Spencer Gorge / Webster Falls Conservation Area, is a beautiful spot that offers nature trails, a historical stone dam and picnic areas. The park was created by the Greensville Optimist Club in 2003. This was the former site of the first steam plant on Spencer Creek, a grist mill and a sawmill owned by William Bullock and Sons, and later the Clark Blanket Factory. The old warehouse still stands across the creek. The cobblestone bridge crossing the Spencer Creek, located in the Spencer Gorge / Webster Falls Conservation Area, was built in 1936. Over time, the bridge fell into disrepair and was slated for demolition. The Greensville Optimists raised the necessary funds to repair and restore the bridge.



LOCATION AND CONTACTS

Christie Lake
Conservation Area/
Spencer Gorge Webster Falls

1000 Highway 5 West,
Dundas, Ontario L9H 5E2
905-628-3060



christie@conservationhamilton.ca

Use today's receipt towards the purchase of a Hamilton Conservation Authority Membership Pass at Christie Lake gatehouse.

The pass is good for 12 consecutive months and entitles entry into HCA parks.



Entrance fees are collected at the gate. A fee schedule is posted at the entrance or visit: www.conservationhamilton.ca

For the latest event listings, outdoor guides and more, visit our website at: www.conservationhamilton.ca



WEBSTER FALLS

One of the most stunning and easily accessed waterfalls in the Hamilton Area, Webster Falls is created by the main branch of the Spencer Creek as it flows into the gorge. Classed as a classical waterfall, the crest is 30 metres (79 feet), and is the largest in the region. The main falls has two overhanging drops with a short break in between. A second smaller 30-foot ribbon waterfall, know as Baby Webster Falls, is located to the west of the main falls. The area in named after the Webster family, who purchased the waterfalls and surrounding land in 1819. Their manor still stands on Webster's Falls Road, accessible only by foot from this area. Family gravestones have been preserved in a small area just off the Bruce Trail by the edge of the woods as you head towards Tew Falls.

NIAGARA ESCARPMENT WORLD BIOSPHERE

The Spencer Adventure Trail is entirely within the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve. The Escarpment is the exposed edge of an ancient fossilized sea bed which began forming 450 million years ago. In 1990 the United Nations declared it a World Biosphere: a program recognizing balance between sustainable human activity and preservation of environmentally significant areas. Along the Niagara Escarpment you will find 25% of Canada's endangered species, orchids found nowhere else in the world, and some of the oldest living trees, the Eastern White Cedar, dated at more than 500 years old. For more information; visit the Giant's Rib Discovery Centre in the Dundas Valley Trail Centre or go to: giantsrib.ca

SPENCER Adventure



TEW FALLS

Logie's Creek tumbles 41 metres over the escarpment to form Tew Falls, just a few metres less in height than Niagara Falls. The gorge at Tew Falls is 41 metres (134.5 feet) tall. The Horseshoe Falls measures 52 metres (170 feet) tall.

Though the flow of Logie's Creek is substantially less than that of the main branch of the Spencer Creek, the sheer height of the falls is what makes it such a stunning site. There are two platforms just off the Bruce Trail that allow visitors a spectacular view of the gorge and the view below.

The falls are named after Johnson Tew who owned the property and the falls from 1874 to 1947. Tew held a number of political positions in the early 1900s. HCA bought the property from the family in the 1960s. The Spencer Gorge was the very first conservation area opened by HCA in September, 1967.

DUNDAS PEAK

Follow HCA's very first trail from Tew Falls to the Dundas Peak for a spectacular view of the gorge below and stunning views of Dundas and Hamilton. Dundas Peak is at the mouth of the Spencer Gorge, and on a clear day, you can see from Stoney Creek and the Hamilton Harbour in the distance, to Dundas and Ancaster immediately below and to the west. Look for familiar landmarks such as the Dundas Valley, Cootes Paradise and McMaster University.



Experience the SPENCER ADVENTURE

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CHRISTIE LAKE

Christie Lake

2 CHRISTIE LAKE DAM

The Christie Lake Dam was completed in 1971 and is the largest flood control structure in the Hamilton Conservation Authority's watershed. Built to reduce flooding in Dundas, it also provides low flow augmentation in dry summers and creates a vibrant habitat for recreation and wildlife. The reservoir covers approximately 60 hectares and contains enough water to fill more than 900 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

3 DARNLEY CASCADE

The Darnley Cascade is a four metre tall, 22 metre wide, washboard curtain cascade. Water flows from the Spencer Creek into Crooks' Hollow, which was founded by James Crooks, a Scottish immigrant who came to the area in 1805.

TRAIL LENGTHS

Christie Dam to Dundas Peak.....5.4 km
Christie Dam to Crooks Hollow.....0.7 km
Christie Dam to Webster Falls.....2.8 km
Webster Falls to Tew Falls.....1.3 km
Tew Falls to Dundas Peak.....1.3 km

5 MORDEN'S HISTORY AND DAM

George Morden arrived in Upper Canada in 1797 from Pennsylvania, and was granted land near Greenville. George's son Jonathon, a sawyer by trade purchased 200 acres of land on the Spencer Creek and constructed the first sawmill on the Upper Spencer in 1801. He was able to force the water over a stone dam and through an opening called a "millrace". Several of the planks and stones used to hold back water at the millrace can still be seen. In the late 1850s, his son, James Morden, added a grist mill to the site. Both mills were destroyed by fire in 1905 and left in ruins.

6 COCKBURN DAM AND MILL

This dam was the fifth to be built on Spencer Creek: used first in 1825 to operate the Kerby sawmill, then in the 1860s for the Wentworth Hub, Spoke and Steam Bending Works which burned in 1879. The foundations were used to construct John Cockburn's saw and planing mill, and later a cider mill operated by Cockburn's son.

7 CLARK'S BLANKET FACTORY

This saw and grist mill was originally built by William Bullock at Bullock's Corner's in 1841. Bullock also constructed the British Hotel at the corners. Upon his death, the mill was leased to Matthew Langley and the three Clark brothers: William, James and Andrew in 1866. They converted the mills to manufacture woolen goods and cloths. This mill burned shortly afterwards but was rebuilt as a stone building, turning out woolen blankets until a heavy flood washed out the dam and the building in 1938. It was never rebuilt. The remains of the storehouse, however, have recently been converted to a wellness retreat and spa on the banks of the Spencer Creek.

LEGEND

- The Spencer Adventure Trail
- The Spencer Adventure Trail/Bruce Trail
- Bruce Trail - Main Trail
- Bruce Trail - Side Trail
- Cycling is not permitted on the Bruce Trail**
- Trail on Private Land - Please respect
- Bicycle By-pass Route
- Shuttle Stop
- Parking Area
- Seasonal Washroom
- HCA Land - Conservation Area
- Water



The Waterfall Shuttle to Spencer Gorge Conservation Area will operate weekends and Holiday Mondays from Easter weekend until the end of October (weather permitting).

Shuttle service begins at 9:30 am to travel to Spencer Gorge.

Shuttle service returning to Christie Lake ends at 6:30 pm (extended to 7:30 pm in June, July and August).

For more information, visit www.conservationhamilton.ca/shuttle

Weir's Lane Dundas Valley Conservation Area →

1 VILLAGE OF CROOKS' HOLLOW

Across from the Darnley Mill is the location of several industries built by James Crooks from the 1820s to 1850s. Located where the small cottage is now, was the distillery that he built. Going up the road on the same side, he built a cooperage, a general store, a blacksmith shop, a hoe and scythe factory and a linseed oil company. Downstream from Crooks' Hollow Road he built a tannery and Canada's first paper mill in 1826. Up at the top of the waterfall, he built a sawmill. By 1850, "Crooks' Hollow" was the largest industrial community in Upper Canada, employing nearly 100 men.

4 DARNLEY (STUTT'S) GRIST & PAPER MILLS

Construction of the Darnley Grist Mill began in 1811 by James Crooks who named it after an ancestral hero, Lord Darnley of Scotland. The mill was originally square in shape, with three levels. The large wall across the centre of the present structure was at one time the outside wall of the mill. The mill contained four runs or sets of grindstones to produce various grades of flour or meal. After Crooks' death in 1860, the mill was sold to James Stutt and Robert Sanderson. In 1880, he added a steam boiler building to heat the water for papermaking and for auxiliary power. On July 9, 1885, the boiler exploded causing much damage and killing two men. The mill was rebuilt and operated until 1902 when William Stutt succeeded his father as owner. William Stutt leased out the mill to the Adams Cellboard Company and later, the Greenville Paper Company in the 1920s and 30s. In 1931, concrete was used to replace the wooden floors. In 1934, the mill was gutted by fire and left in ruins. HCA purchased the mill in 1969.

SPENCER GORGE/WEBSTER FALLS

DUNDAS PEAK

DUNDAS

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