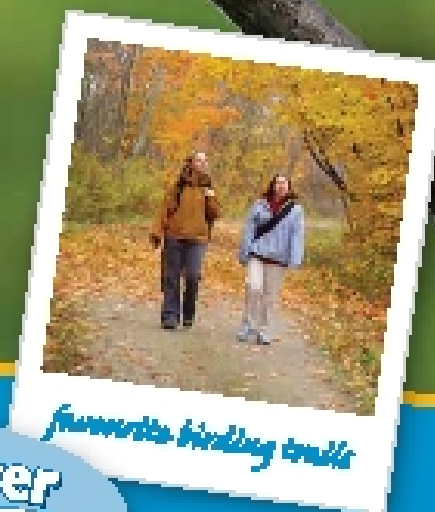
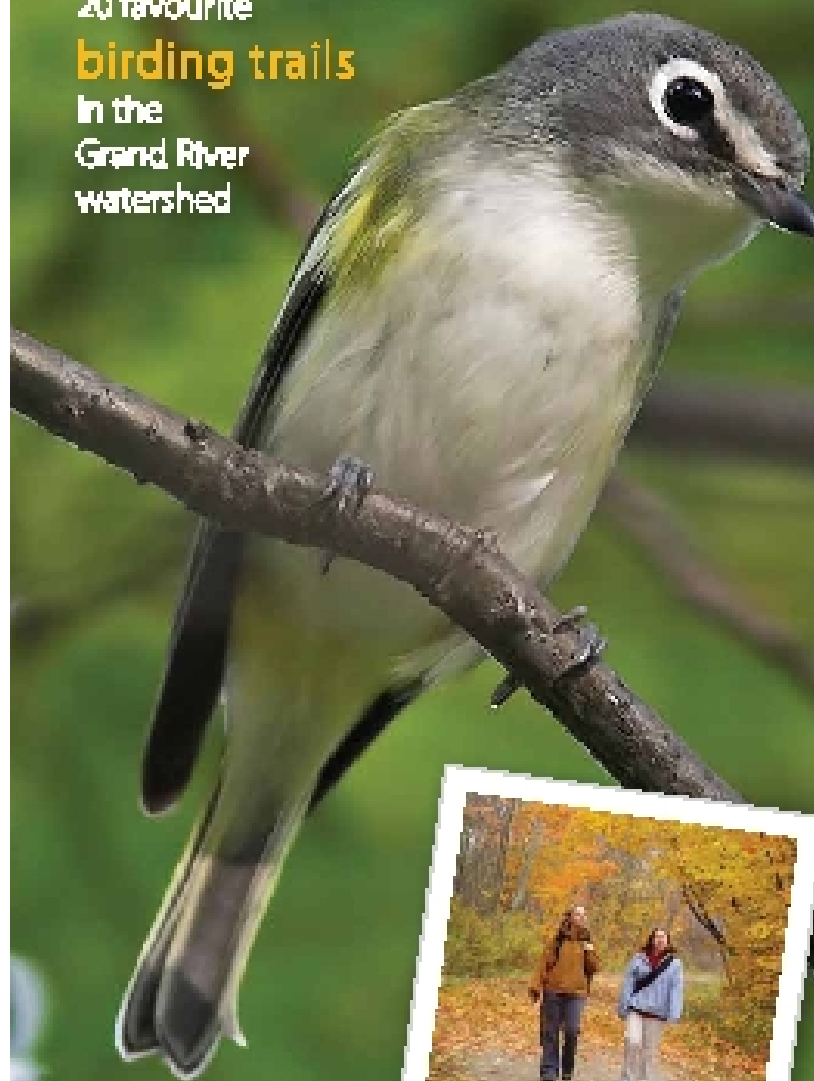


# TRAILS

take

# Flight

20 favourite  
**birding trails**  
In the  
Grand River  
watershed



*favorite birding trails*



# About Grand River Country

Located just west of Toronto, the Grand River watershed is the largest inland river system in southern Ontario, extending 280 km from Dundalk in the north to Port Maitland on Lake Erie. Covering more than 6,800 km<sup>2</sup> in area, the watershed includes not only the main Grand River, but also major tributaries such as the Conestogo, Speed, Eramosa and Nith rivers.

Being so large, and running in a generally north-south orientation, the Grand River crosses no less than four Climate Zones and two Forest Zones. Despite a population approaching 1 million people, with major urban areas and intensive agriculture, there is a surprising array of important natural habitats and scenic landscapes. In 1994 the Grand

was officially designated a Canadian Heritage River, in recognition of its significant natural and human heritage.



For more detailed information, explore the **Trails Take Flight** section of the Grand River Country website:

[www.grandrivercountry.com](http://www.grandrivercountry.com)

## Birding in the Grand River Watershed

Bird watching, or "birding" as it is increasingly known, is growing in popularity everywhere. The Grand River watershed has much to offer the birder, and the trails of the watershed provide wonderful opportunities to enjoy this activity in all seasons. More than 290 species of birds have been reported here during spring and fall migration, and close to 200 species nest.

Many birds are habitat-specific, and the selected 20 trails represent a variety of habitats, including: rivers and lakes, wetlands, coniferous and deciduous forests, meadows and open fields, and regenerating farmland and scrubby edges (which are surprisingly rich in bird life).

The watershed is also home to numerous **Species at Risk**, including forest birds such as the Acadian Flycatcher, Hooded Warbler and Red-shouldered Hawk; wetland birds like the Least Bittern and Black Tern; urban birds such as the Chimney Swift and Common Nighthawk; and birds of more open habitats like the Red-headed Woodpecker, Short-eared Owl and Golden-winged Warbler. Bald Eagles nest at both the northern and southern extremes of the watershed, and can be seen in winter along open, "ice-free" areas of the river.



The website gives more in-depth data including locator maps for each trail, printable detailed maps of the individual trail routes, as well as comprehensive trail descriptions and expanded listings of the bird species to be found.





Photo by Jeff Lewis

# Trails in the Grand River Watershed

The Grand River watershed is blessed with an abundance of hiking and/or cycling trails that offer some of the best ways to experience the river's natural and historic attractions. Most of the trails in this publication are free for use, making these healthy activities available to people of all age, income and ability levels.

Most trails are multi-use, primarily for walking, cycling (bicycles, not motorbikes), and cross-country skiing. Two of the trails allow horses and/or snowmobiles in season. The level of difficulty of the trails varies somewhat, but most are easy to moderate in difficulty. Some are wheelchair accessible, while others may have moderate slopes, stairs or boardwalks.

There are two major trail systems that dominate the watershed, and representative sections are included in our selection of 20 trails. The first is the Grand Valley Trail, which runs from north to south almost the entire length of the watershed. The other is the Trans-Canada Trail, which in its broader scope allows one to walk from one coast of Canada to the other! Many local trails in the Grand River watershed are integrated into the southern Ontario loop of the Trans-Canada Trail.



*Along the Grand River*

*Cycling the rail trail*

*Feeding Chickadees on the boardwalk*

*Bird observation tower*

*Snowshoe the trails*

*Photo by Jeff Lewis*

## Let's get started

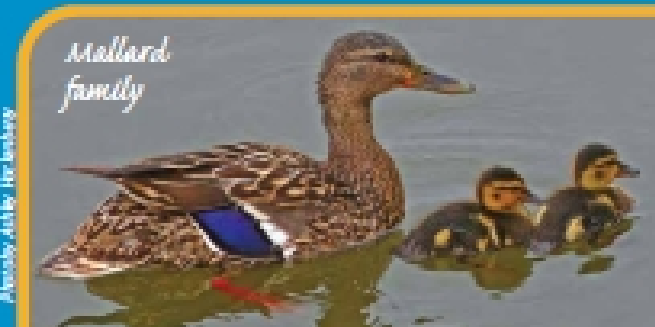
Beginning birders should beware that birding can become a life-time addiction! A reputable nature store will offer appropriate advice on binoculars and field guides for bird identification. Joining one of the local nature clubs or hiking clubs can expand your knowledge and interest.

To experience the trails in comfort, wear clothing suitable to the season and footwear appropriate to the trail conditions. Bring a drink and a snack, but leave pets and noisy behaviour at home (birds tend to stay still and hide, or take flight if a threat is perceived).

Trail users are asked to show consideration for the natural environment by staying on the formal trail path. "Take nothing but pictures, and leave nothing but footprints" is a good motto for both groups and solitary users.

"The Grand's trails provide first class birding opportunities, and an excellent cross-section of the area's diverse bird life."

*Mike Cadman, Co-editor, Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario, 2001-2005.*



*Mallard family*

Photo by Abby Healey

# TRAILS take Flight

20 beautiful birding trails  
in the Grand River watershed



For more detailed information, visit our Trails take Flight web site at the Grand River Country website at [www.grandrivercountry.com](http://www.grandrivercountry.com). This gives you in-depth data including location maps for each trail, printable trail maps, as well as maps of individual trail routes, as well as maps of trail descriptions and important sightings of the bird species in the area.

**Birding trail**  
Birding trail

**Transportation**

- Major Highways
- Secondary Highways
- Major Road

**Boundaries**

- Grand River Watershed Boundary
- County Regional Municipality Boundary

**Water**

- Water

**Other areas**

- Waste Transfer Station
- Landfill
- Composting Unit

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## Trail name & location

- Little Bush Bogger Trail**  
Grand Valley  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- Steele Canyon Trailway**  
Belleville Drive  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- Mill Race Trail**  
St. Jacobs  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- BM Trail - Waterloo Trail**  
Waterloo  
(City of Waterloo)
- Tepler's Park Trail**  
Grand Valley  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- Gilbert Macdonay Memorial Trail**  
Rockwood Conservation Area  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- Coopers River Trail**  
Guelph  
(City of Guelph)
- Adrian's Trail**  
Guelph  
(University of Guelph)
- Stanley Hill Trail**  
Arlow Street Guelph  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- Harro National Area Trail**  
Waterloo  
(City of Waterloo)
- Linear Trail**  
Cambridge (East End)  
(City of Cambridge)
- Clayton Wilderness Area**  
West of Waterloo  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- U.S. National Wilderness Area**  
South of Cambridge  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- Cambridge to Park Rail Trail**  
Clayton to Park  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)
- St. John's Trail - Blue Circle Loop**  
Scarfield  
(City of Scarfield)
- Garbin Green Memorial Parkway**  
Waterloo Park, Scarfield  
(City of Scarfield)
- De Winton Nature Trail**  
Chesapeake  
(De Winton Township)
- Salway Riverside Trail**  
Caledonia Park  
(Caledonia Rotary Club)
- Eastman Riverside Trail**  
Cayuga  
(Eastman Park National Historic Site)
- Tapscott Nature Centre**  
West of Cayuga  
(Grand River Conservation Authority)

**Disclaimer**  
Maps and trail information presented in this publication are for informational purposes only. Trail routes, conditions, access and permitted use may change over time. Within the parameters of the Grand River Country System Strategy, the management of trails included in this publication, you enter the accuracy of the information contained in the map and trail at the user's responsibility. Any interpretation or modification of the map and trail is the user's responsibility. Please use the map and trail at your own risk. Use according to weather conditions, water conditions beyond your ability, and remember that safety is a personal responsibility.

**Credits**  
The "Trails take Flight" brochure and accompanying website were published by the Grand River Country Recreation Authority in partnership with the Grand River Conservation Authority.



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Great photos: Blue heron: Peter Phillips; Killdeer: Ray and Jessica Dodge; Loon: Peter Phillips.



Exploring the trails in this brochure is just one of the ways that you can experience a "Grand Adventure" in the great outdoors this year.

## Contact:

**Web** [www.grandrivercountry.com](http://www.grandrivercountry.com)  
**E-mail** [GRCA@grandriver.ca](mailto:GRCA@grandriver.ca)  
**Toll-free** (866) 900-4722



*Expect  
adventure,  
picturesque  
scenery  
and warm  
hospitality.*

