


**Land Acknowledgement**

The *rare* Charitable Research Reserve stewards over 1,200 acres of land, but we are not the first to do so. The trails on this map are located within the Haldimand Tract, which spans six miles on either side of the Grand River and is the territory of the Onkwehon:we Peoples of the Six Nations of the Grand River. It is also territory of the Anishinaabe Peoples Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We honour and respect the sovereignty of these First Nations and their ancestors. The lands we steward are home to many other First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have moved to the area from across Turtle Island.

As a settler-founded and -led organization, we make this land acknowledgement in admission of the cultural and historical harm inflicted by settlers on Indigenous peoples that has led to generational trauma and systemic injustices that persist to this day, including the dispossession of land. We acknowledge that the lands we live on, work on and derive benefit from were taken away from the original stewards, and it is our goal to restore that connection and to work towards building ethical, reciprocal relationships with the local First Nations of the lands where *rare* is situated.

We commit to learning about and acting on our responsibilities as settlers of these lands and unlearning our cultural and historical biases that contributed to making these systemic injustices possible in what we now call Canada

**Trails near the Village of Blair**

**Thompson Tract/  
Ancient Woods Trails**

- MPL Maple Lane
- DR Deer Run
- GAL Grand Allée

**Riverside Trails**

- RIV River Trail
- VDL Woodland Trail
- OSP Osprey Trail
- ALV Alvar Trail
- ECO ECO Trail
- GT Grand Trunk Trail (Maintained by the City of Cambridge)

**Springbank Farm Trails**

- NEU Neuman Trail
- BTF Butterfly Loop
- SPR Springbank Trail

**Other Symbols**


- Parking Available
- Trail Junction
- Access routes from Highway 401
- Access routes from Galt
- Langdon Hall Trails (approximate; visit langdonhall.ca for details)

Note: Dashed lines indicate trail closes for the winter. Refer to trail descriptions and *rare's* website for details

Map information courtesy Open Street Maps (openstreetmaps.org);  
Compass Vectors by nemanja.poslovno706 at Vecteezy

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Effective May 1, 2023

rare

BLAIR AREA

TRAIL MAP

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Welcome to **rare’s** Trails!

The trails at **rare** are free and open to the public from dawn to dusk for exercise and connecting to nature. To ensure these trails remain in their best condition for the local environment and for all trail users, we ask that all visitors remain on the marked trails and refrain from camping, foraging and littering. Motorized vehicles are **not** permitted on **rare’s** trails.

Dogs are allowed on the trails of the Thompson Tract/ Ancient Woods and Springbank Farm, and on the ECO Centre Trail and the Grand Trunk Trail, but all pets must be on a leash when using these trails. For the safety of trail users, their pets and local wildlife as well as the health of the local ecology, **dogs are not permitted on the remaining trails through rare**.

We welcome everyone who uses our trails, and thank everybody for keeping the trails clean and healthy.

- E

Easy Walk
- M

Medium Difficulty
- Dogs Allowed on Leash
- Dogs Not Allowed
- Cyclists Allowed
- Cyclists Not Allowed

- OPEN  
YEAR ROUND

Trail Open Year Round
- CLOSED  
NOV 15-MAR 15

CLOSED  
NOV 1-APR 30

Trail Closed Between Dates Shown

Thompson Tract/Ancient Woods Trails:

Grand Allée (1120 m) 

E

OPEN YEAR ROUND

The Grand Allée is an historic carriageway. The original brick gateway structures can be seen at the trailhead at Whistle Bare Road. From here, the Grand Allée travels along a hedgerow and enters into the old growth forest remnant of Ancient Woods featuring a cathedral-like canopy. Some trees in this forest are more than 250 years old! Deeper into the forest, the trail crosses Bauman Creek, a coldwater tributary to the Grand River. This easy trail on soil/rocky substrate is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife.

Maple Lane (620 m) 

E

OPEN YEAR ROUND

The Grand Allée veers westward into Maple Lane, another historic carriageway, but this one lined with large Sugar Maples. Maple Lane continues into **rare’s** Butterfly Meadow within the Thompson Tract. The meadow is planted with several butterfly host plants and is a haven for numerous species of butterflies. Maple Lane exits onto Langdon Drive, where a small road shoulder is available for visitor parking.

This trail offers an easy walk on soil/grass substrate and is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife.

Deer Run (970 m) 

E

OPEN YEAR ROUND

The Deer Run Trail connects Maple Lane back to the Grand Allée Trail, looping through an old Black Walnut plantation intercropped with pine. The plantation offered a stark contrast from the structure of a diverse forest ecosystem, although in recent years, thanks to external funding, a number of restoration has been carried out to plant a greater diversity of species, which has led to a return of a number of native butterfly species.

This trail offers an easy walk on soil/grass substrate and is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife.

Riverside Trails:

ECO Centre (230 m) 

E

OPEN YEAR ROUND

The ECO Centre Trail connects the ECO Centre to the Grand Trunk Trail (maintained by the City of Cambridge). The trail starts east of **rare’s** iconic 1840s Slit Barn and proceeds through a grassland habitat. Along the way, look for the sculpture *Elinor, The Bald Eagle*, which was created and donated in 2006 by local metal artist John De Boer.

This trail is an easy walk on grass/soil substrate, good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife.

Osprey Tower (750 m) 

E

CLOSED NOV 15-MAR 15

Starting immediately across the Grand Trunk Trail from the ECO Centre Trail, the Osprey Tower Trail travels through a shrubland habitat to just west at the Grand River and the junction with the River Trail. There, it enters a grassland meadow offering visitors a clear view of **rare’s** first Osprey Tower, erected in 2007. Visitors can return to the Grand River to connect with the River Trail, or opt to continue on the loop back to the Grand Trunk Trail through the butterfly grove planted with nectar and host plants to attract various butterfly species.

This trail offers an easy walk on grass/soil substrate and is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife. Dogs and cyclists are not permitted on this trail. This trail closes from November 15-March 15 for the safety of users and wintering wildlife.

River (1930 m) 

M

CLOSED NOV 15-MAR 15

The River Trail is longest trail in **rare’s** Blair network. The trail follows the Grand River and showcases the mature deciduous forest and limestone cliffs on this area of the property. The River Trail passes several archeological points of interest including a stone fire pit, hunting sites, and paleo-point sites.

At the junction of the Osprey Tower and River trails, the confluence of the Grand and Speed Rivers is visible. At its eastern end, the River Trail ends at the Lookout, which provides a scenic view of the Grand River below.

This trail offers a walk of medium difficulty on soil/rocky substrate, and is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife. Dogs and cyclists are **not** permitted on this trail. This trail closes from November 15-March 15 for the safety of users and wintering wildlife.

Woodland (750 m) 

E

CLOSED NOV 15-MAR 15

The Woodland Trail intersects the River Trail at its halfway mark, heading back towards the Grand Trunk Trail. This trail travels through a mature forest within the Cliffs and Alvars area of **rare**. In spring, ephemerals (wildflowers with a short blooming time) such as White Trillium can be seen carpeting the forest floor. Other noteworthy plants include Wild Ginger, Bloodroot, and Canada Mayapple.

This trail offers an easy walk on soil/rocky substrate and is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife. Dogs and cyclists are **not** permitted on this trail. This trail closes from November 15-March 15 for the safety of users and wintering wildlife.

Alvar (280 m) 

E

CLOSED NOV 15-MAR 15

Alvars are a globally rare ecosystem found on **rare** lands. The vegetation in this habitat reflects the extreme conditions of the alvar, with drought tolerant and shade intolerant plants, such as Eastern Red Cedar and Northern Prickly Ash, predominating. The Alvar trail connects the Woodland Trail to the eastern limb of the River Trail at the top of the Rock Staircase.

This trail offers an easy walk on soil/rocky substrate and is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife. Dogs and cyclists are **not** permitted on this trail.

Springbank Farm Trails:

Butterfly Loop (930m) 

E

CLOSED NOV 1-APR 30

The Butterfly Interpretive Loop is a grass trail that encircles the Springbank Community Gardens. There are seven interpretive signs that provide information about the plant and butterfly species that frequent the area around the trail. This trail also passes the Conceptual Longhouse in which stakes have been arranged to help visitors visualize the size and layout of a traditional Longhouse.

This trail offers an easy walk on grass substrate and is good for hiking and birding. Dogs and cyclists are **not** permitted on this trail. This trail closes from November 1 to April 30.

Springbank (300 m) 

E

OPEN YEAR ROUND

From the South Parking Lot across Blair Road from **rare’s** historic Slit Barn, the Springbank Trail parallels Blair Road through meadow and woodland, before ending at the parking lot at the entrance to North House and Springbank Farm. Connections are made here with the Butterfly Loop and the Neuman Trail.

This trail offers an easy walk on soil/gravel substrate and is good for hiking, birding and viewing wildlife.

Neuman (700 m) 

E

OPEN YEAR ROUND

The Neuman Trail is **rare’s** newest trail in the Blair Area, named for Martin Neuman, an early supporter of **rare**. Starting from the Springbank Farm parking lot, the trail branches left from the gravel laneway, paralleling Blair Road southeast along a grassland meadow and through a copse of trees, across a bridge over a small creek, before curving south through more meadow. It leaves **rare** lands, skirting a stormwater basin and exiting onto Newman Drive (different Newman). No parking is provided at Newman Drive for trail users; it is recommended that the South Parking Lot at the west end of Springbank Trail be used instead.

The trail offers an easy walk on soil/gravel substrate and is good for hiking.