



Potato Hill Farm Outdoor Education Center

Black River Canal Trail Points of Interest

1. Black River Canal - connects the Erie Canal to the Black River. 35 miles long, but it had 109 locks.
2. Limestone - The bedrock of this area made of marine animal skeletons and shells.
3. Five combines - a series of locks that were placed end to end to raise and lower boats
4. Tug Hill Plateau - not really a plateau called a cuesta (kwes-ta). 350 feet on the west to 2,000 feet in the east.
5. Violets - common spring plant of this area. typical purple or white
6. Locks - canallers raised or lowered the boats from one level to another.
7. Bedstraw - actually called field madder, used as a form of bed stuffing by the pioneers.
8. Trillium - white or dull red three leaves surrounding the flower
9. Maple trees - Most maples in this area have 5 pointed leaves. Trees are tapped in the spring when days are warm and the nights cold.
10. White pine - common pine in our area - needle bundles contain 5 individual needles.
11. Yarrow - Yarrow grows up to 3 feet tall - leaves have a delicate, lacy appearance. Flower heads are white
12. Maidenhair ferns - Maidenhair fronds have dark, shiny stems.

13. Ostrich fern - fronds are tapered on both ends with brown stems
14. Christmas fern - Christmas fern stays green right through winter
15. Queen Anne's Lace - biennial plant commonly called a wild carrot

Black River Canal Trail

1. Black River Canal - The **Black River Canal** was a canal built in northern New York in the USA to connect the Erie Canal to the Black River. This canal was only 35 miles long, but it had 109 locks. This canal was the longest-surviving of the Erie Canal's feeder canal system, remaining in use until 1920.
2. Limestone - The bedrock of this area which represents fragments of marine animal skeletons and shells. About 10% of all sedimentary rocks are types of limestone. Limestone is a very popular building block since it is hard, durable, and commonly occurs in easily accessible surface exposures.
3. Five combines - a series of locks that were placed end to end to raise and lower boats over a steep change in elevation. The number of combines in this canal is a world record.
4. Tug Hill Plateau - The Tug Hill Plateau is not really a plateau at all. It was formed by a large area that rose on one side and dropped on the other side. It is more accurately called a cuesta (kwes-ta). It rises from about 350 feet on the west side to over 2,000 feet in the east.
5. Violets - is a common spring plant of this area. It grows well even in the acidic soils of the North Country. It is used in cooking, medicines, and perfumes. In this narrow gorge, you may see the typical purple or white variety. Some variegated blossoms can also be found
6. Locks - Locks are the means by which the canallers raised or lowered the boats from one level to another. The wooden gates that opened and closed allowed each boat to rise or fall with the water level in the lock.
7. Bedstraw - This plant is actually called field Madder, but is often

used as a form of bed straw. Its roots found favor with the first settlers as a source of red dye.

8. Trillium - Trillium looks very much like a small lily. Here along the Lansing Kill it occurs in its white or dull red form. What looks like three leaves surrounding the flower are actually part of the flower itself. The seeds are spread by ants. The white trillium is the flower representing Ontario to our north and can be seen on a number of signs. It is somewhat at risk. Tribes in this area used it for all sorts of skin irritations and child-birth.

9. Maple trees - Maples are a large group of trees that have a few things in common. Their leaves are labeled acerbic which indicates the points on each leaf. Most maples in this area have 5 pointed or palmate leaves. The central lobe is longer than the others. Sugar maples are prevalent in these areas. Trees are tapped in the spring when days are warm and nights cold. Gerrit Boon, the founder of Boonville, attempted to start a sugar plantation in this area.

10. White pine - The white pine is a common pine in our area. It's branches are ended by a clump of needle bundles which cluster in a brush-like formation. Each of the needle bundles contains 5 individual needles.

11. Yarrow - Yarrow grows up to 3 feet tall and has no branches except near the top. The leaves have a delicate, fernlike, lacy appearance. Flower heads are white and arranged in clusters at the top of the stem. Yarrow flower was often used as a poultice for skin problems. Wild animals such as bear have been found using a mud and yarrow poultice for wounds.

12. Maidenhair ferns - Maidenhair fronds have dark, shiny stems. This graceful, fan-like pattern is unique. Burgundy red fiddleheads appear in early spring. The roots are wiry and black.

13. Ostrich fern - The ostrich fern are 2-4 ft. tall, fronds are tapered on both ends with brown stems. Fertile fronds form a beaded plume through winter.

14. Christmas fern - Christmas fern got its name because it stays

green right through the holiday season. It has glossy, green fronds year-round. The silvery fiddleheads emerge in early spring.

15. Queen Anne's Lace - Queen Anne's Lace is a biennial plant that is found in most areas of the North Country. During its first year it is commonly called a wild carrot which is the taproot for the flowering stage in the second year. There is a deep purple bloom in the center of the flower head.