



## **The Land Conservancy Challenge—a Scavenger Hunt!**

Participation is free, but with a suggested [donation of \\$50 you can help protect land in Western New York for future generations.](#)

As we roll into summer with social distancing guidelines still in place, we're all looking for exciting things to do. The Land Conservancy wants to help. So we've created the Land Conservancy Challenge!

With the Land Conservancy Challenge, we encourage you to get outdoors at our nature preserves. It's a scavenger hunt, it's an opportunity to explore new places, but perhaps best of all it's a chance to have a little fun with your friends and family while you stay safe and socially distant.

If you'd like to participate by yourself or with a family, would you consider donating to support conservation? Donate here: [wnylc.org](http://wnylc.org). We understand if you can't donate, and we would love for you to participate either way.

It's simple. Here's how the Scavenger Hunt works:

- 1) If you have not already registered, click [here to return to the website.](#)
- 2) Print the preserves [checklist](#)
- 3) Visit each of the 7 nature preserves on the list of preserves (found below on pages 3 to 16 of this document)
- 4) Find the scavenger hunt item listed for each preserve and snap a photo of it (and use the checklist to mark off the preserves you've visited)
- 5) Optional but encouraged! Post the photo to one of your social media accounts and tag us (Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram) with the hashtag #landconservancychallenge. When you are done with the challenge, simply email your checklist and photos to our community relations specialist, Alexa Ringer, at [aringer@wnylc.org](mailto:aringer@wnylc.org)
- 6) Encourage your friends and colleagues to join in the fun with you

That's all you have to do. The Land Conservancy Challenge begins today, and it will run until October 15<sup>th</sup> or until all the prizes are won, so it's time to get out there and explore!

### **Prizes:**

**The first individual** to collect all 7 scavenger hunt items gets a private nature tour of the Land Conservancy preserve of your choice with a Land Conservancy staff member, a Land Conservancy beanie, and a Land Conservancy sticker

**The first family** to collect all 7 scavenger hunt items gets a private nature tour of the Land Conservancy preserve of your choice with a Land Conservancy staff member, 3 Land Conservancy beanies, and a Land Conservancy sticker

**Most Creative:** The individual or family with the most creative photographs or social media posts will get a private nature tour of the Land Conservancy preserve of your choice with a Land Conservancy staff member, up to 3 Land Conservancy beanies, and a Land Conservancy sticker. This prize will be chosen by Land Conservancy staff.

**For all Land Conservancy Properties, the following rules apply:**

- **No dogs allowed**
- **No bikes or motorized vehicles**
- **Stay on Trail**
- **Hours Dawn to Dusk**

**Please note:** When you are out on these trails, there will be bugs, and there may also be some rough, even muddy terrain. We advise you to dress accordingly, wear boots, sunscreen, and bug spray whenever necessary. And, as ever, please be aware of deer ticks and check yourself and your loved ones following each hike.

## The Preserves

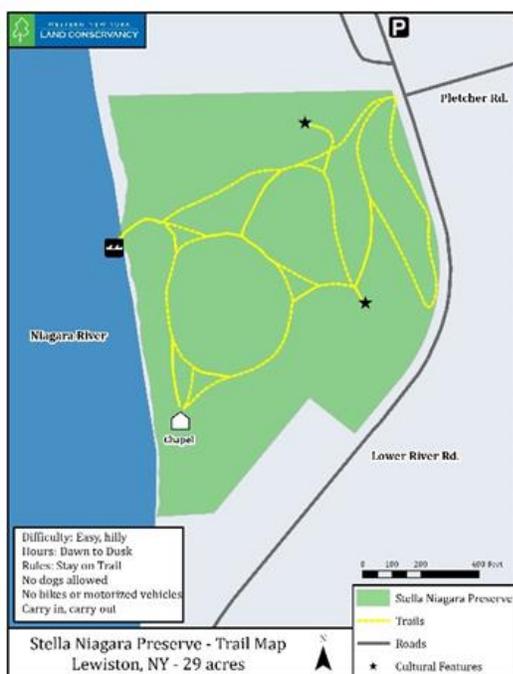
### 1) Stella Niagara Preserve

(4214-4448 Lower River Rd, Lewiston, NY 14092). [LINK to Google Maps](#)

Trail length: over 1 mile of trails

Land Conservancy contact: [ksemmel@wnylc.org](mailto:ksemmel@wnylc.org). Telephone: (716) 687-1225

**Land Conservancy Challenge Task: Take a photo of yourself next to the water at the Stella Landing**



**Highlights:** The property has incredible ecological importance. The entire Niagara River is an internationally designated globally significant Important Bird Area, a designation shared with places like the Everglades and Yellowstone. The property has a variety of habitats including a riparian zone, a large meadow, a forested area, and vernal pools. These habitats support rare plants and animals like the threatened Bald Eagle and Lake Sturgeon.

Scenic views offered from the hilltop near the pedestrian path offer peaceful sunrises and breathtaking sunsets across the Niagara River. The intricate trail system we installed in recent years will take you into the meadow to enjoy the abundant bird life there. This expansive meadow is protected on both sides by northern hardwood forests. Bluebirds are a common nesting bird in the meadow and orioles build their pendulous nests high on the

edge of the neighboring forest canopy. To date, over 100 bird species have been observed in the Preserve. If you walk down the trail to the Niagara River's edge, you can enjoy refreshing summer breezes and winter congregations of waterfowl along with 18 species of gulls in this unique setting. This gentle incline is uncommon in the Niagara River corridor and is one reason this was an important canoe landing site for the region's Haudenosaunee who used the Niagara River for transport, trade, and fishing. The landing is a popular kayak launch and resting spot for those traveling along the River.

**Trail surface:** grass, sometimes muddy

**Special considerations:** Visitors can park at Lewiston Senior Center lot and cross Lower River Road at the crosswalk. A kiosk adjacent to Lower River Road at the northeast corner entrance to the Preserve provides a map of the trail system and features, and also conveys the Preserve's usage rules. Visitors should plan to walk up and down a slight incline.

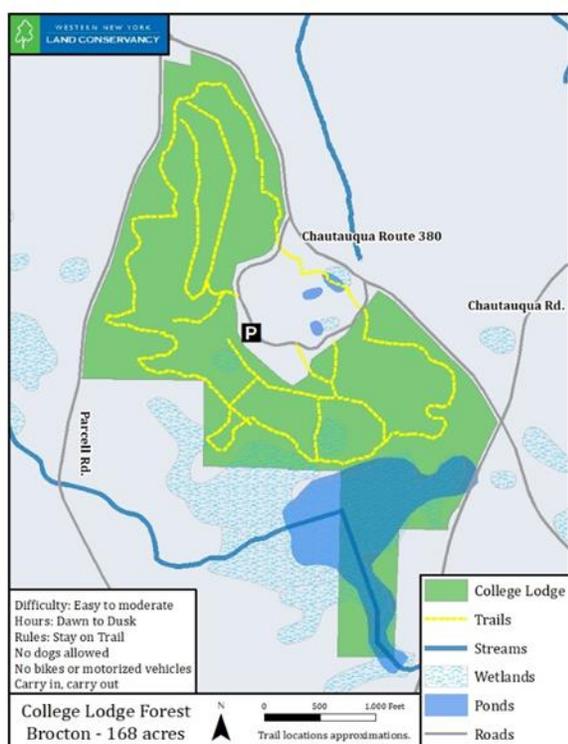
## 2) College Lodge Forest

(8067 Route 380, Brocton, NY 14716 [Near Fredonia]) [LINK to Google Maps](#)

Trail length: Multiple trails totaling over 4.5 miles

Land Conservancy contact: [ksemmel@wnylc.org](mailto:ksemmel@wnylc.org). Telephone: (716) 687-1225

**Land Conservancy Challenge Task: Take a photo of the most beautiful flower you find. But please stay on the trails and don't pick the flowers; they should be easy to spot on the trails**



**Highlights:** The College Lodge Forest—which the Western New York Land Conservancy is raising funds in 2020 to permanently protect—is situated on the Portage Escarpment overlooking the Lake Erie plain. The land sits on a continental divide: on one side rainwater drains towards Lake Erie and the Atlantic Ocean, while on the other side it drains towards the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. The heart of the forest is anchored by a grove of towering old-growth trees hundreds of years old, extremely rare in Western New York. The forest is part of a major flyway for migratory birds that come from as far south as the Amazon rainforest in the spring, such as the plump little Veery with its distinctive flute-like whistle, and from as far north as the Arctic tundra in the fall. It also boasts a stunning diversity of reptiles, amphibians, fish, mammals, and countless other species that have few

such sanctuaries left in our region. These include beautiful orchids, carnivorous plants that eat insects, and bryozoans—aquatic invertebrate animals that behave in some ways like coral—that live in the marsh. The forest has miles of walking trails named after Muir, Leopold, and Darwin as a testament to the land's natural significance.

The Faculty Student Association (FSA), a non-profit auxiliary of SUNY Fredonia, has owned the property and operated a historic lodge on the site since 1969. By purchasing 168 acres from the FSA, the Land Conservancy will protect the forest and the FSA will be able to invest funds from the sale into the stewardship of visitor facilities on the portion of the property it retains. The FSA will continue to own and operate the lodge and the 33 acres surrounding it.

**Trail surface:** Soil

**Special considerations:** There is ample parking in the College Lodge lot.

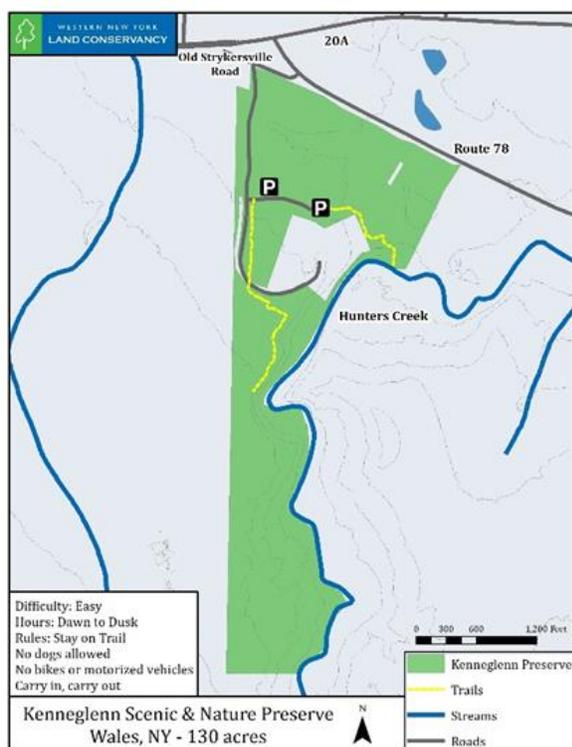
### 3) Kenneglenn Scenic & Nature Preserve

(11663 Strykersville Rd, East Aurora, NY 14052) [LINK to Google Maps](#)

Trail length: 1.5 miles

Land Conservancy contact: [ksemmel@wnylc.org](mailto:ksemmel@wnylc.org). Telephone: (716) 687-1225

**Land Conservancy Challenge Task: Take a photo of yourself striking a pose on or near the rock wall overlooking the meadow behind the office**



**Highlights:** The Kenneglenn Scenic and Nature Preserve is a 131-acre Preserve located in Wales, just 30 miles from downtown Buffalo. Kenneglenn includes portions of the spectacular Hunters Creek gorge, and features wetlands and forests, as well as beautiful views of the gently rolling hills that are characteristic of southern Erie County. You can take the Creek View trail to get down to Hunters Creek, or enjoy the Gorge Rim trail to enjoy views of the Hunters Creek Gorge from above.

**Trail surface:** Soil and grass

**Special considerations:** The long one-lane driveway to the preserve is shared with our neighbors, so please proceed cautiously and make use of the pull offs to allow passersby. Please be mindful of our boundary markers and respect our neighbors' privacy. There are two parking areas available once you turn down the Land Conservancy's private driveway from the one-lane driveway off Old Strykersville Road. The first is on the left as you first

turn down the Land Conservancy's driveway, which is best for accessing the Gorge Rim trail. Visitors can also park in the Western New York Conservancy parking lot farther down the driveway. To access the Creek View trail, walk behind the Land Conservancy building to the stone wall, and head down the slope through the meadow to the Creek.

## 4) Owens Falls Sanctuary

(720 Center St, East Aurora, NY 14052) [LINK to Google Maps](#)

Trail length: 1.5 miles

Land Conservancy contact: [ksemmel@wnylc.org](mailto:ksemmel@wnylc.org). Telephone: (716) 687-1225

**Land Conservancy Challenge Task: Take a photo of yourself seated on your favorite bench**



**Highlights:** The Owens Falls Sanctuary features two magnificent waterfalls that were formed by a 2,000-foot-long stretch of Mann's Creek that flows through a 100-foot-deep ravine. Its mature hemlock and beech woods, seasonal woodland pools, and forested wetlands are home to migrating birds, breeding frogs and salamanders, and dense patches of rare wildflowers. The property also includes mature headwater forests, which, along with the wetlands, are vital to maintaining water quality in the Buffalo River and Niagara River watersheds.

**Trail surface:** Soil, bog bridging

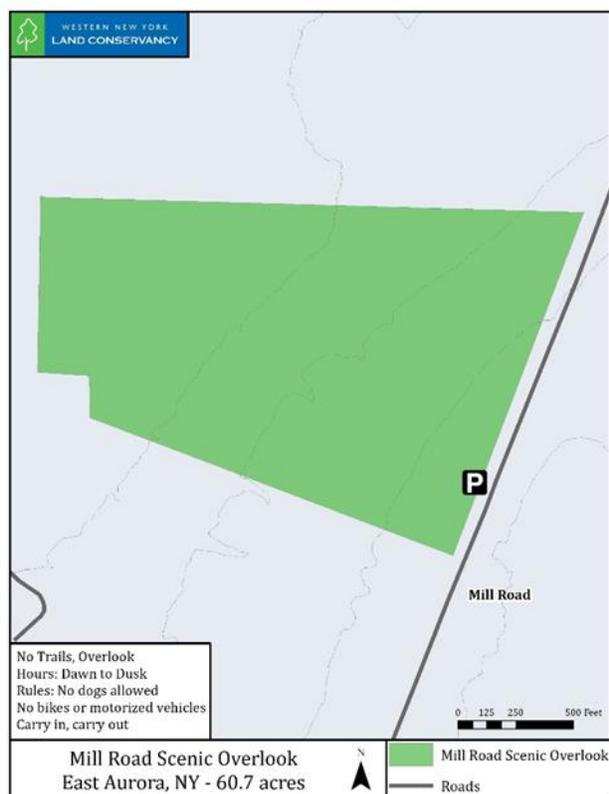
**Special considerations:** Parking is located off Center Street in Aurora, NY. No More than 5 cars are allowed in the lot at any given time; please respect neighboring landowners. Parking on Center Street is prohibited. On this walk, the trail crosses Mann's Creek. Depending on the season and the amount of water in the creek, the water could run high and fast; please exercise caution. Visitors should wear boots.

## 5) Mill Road Scenic Overlook

(1245 Mill Rd, East Aurora, NY 14052) [LINK to Google Maps](#)

Land Conservancy contact: [ksemmel@wnylc.org](mailto:ksemmel@wnylc.org). Telephone: (716) 687-1225

**Land Conservancy Challenge Task: Take a photo with the beautiful scenic overlook in the background**



**Highlights:** The Mill Road Scenic Overlook is located on Mill Rd. in Aurora, between Sweet and Blakely roads. It is one of the most iconic locations along the Western New York Southtowns Scenic Byway. A roadside pull-off with benches allows visitors to enjoy breathtaking views across the Cazenovia Creek valley and see the grassland birds that nest on the property, like the bobolink and eastern meadowlark. The pull-off is open to visitors, although there are no trails through the property. The Town of Aurora owns the land and the Land Conservancy holds a conservation easement on it to protect it in perpetuity.

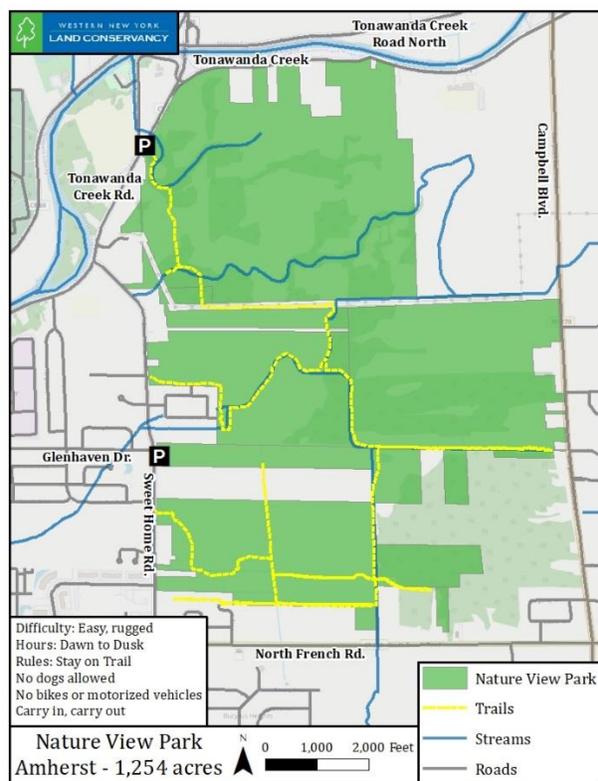
## 6) Nature View Park

(Nature View Park, Amherst, NY 14228). [LINK to Google Maps](#)

Trail length: over 3 miles of trails

Land Conservancy contact: [ksemmel@wnylc.org](mailto:ksemmel@wnylc.org). Telephone: (716) 687-1225

**Land Conservancy Challenge Task: Take a photo of a frog or toad, but please stay on the trails; they should be easy to spot there. If you cannot find one, an alternative is to take a photo along any section of the trail**



**Highlights:** The Land Conservancy holds a conservation easement on this 1,254-acre park, owned by the Town of Amherst. The park—with its vast forests, fields, creeks, and trail system—is an enormous asset that enhances the community’s quality of life, and is the Land Conservancy’s largest protected property. This is an extremely large protected area for Erie County, and safeguards important wildlife habitat.

**Trail surface:** Soil and grass

**Special considerations:** There are two entries to this Preserve, one on Tonawanda Creek Rd. across from the entry to the Town of Amherst Veterans Canal Park. There is also an entry off Sweet Home Rd. As you head north on Sweet Home Rd., the entry is on your right, at the intersection with Glenhaven. At this preserve you will find an especially large number of bugs. Be prepared.

## 7) Lytle Nature Preserve

(6637 N Canal Rd, Lockport, NY 14094) [LINK to Google Maps](#)

Trail length: 1.7 miles

Land Conservancy contact: [ksemmel@wnylc.org](mailto:ksemmel@wnylc.org). Telephone: (716) 687-1225

**Land Conservancy Challenge Task: Take a photo of a butterfly. Please stay on the trails. They should be easy to spot there. If you cannot, an alternative is to take a photo on the trail with the meadow in the background**



**Highlights:** The 75-acre Lytle Nature Preserve was donated to the Town of Lockport by William F. Lytle in 2008, and is protected by the Land Conservancy with a conservation easement. The property has diverse habitats including wetlands, mixed hardwood forests, farmland, and open meadows, including 47 acres of grassland maintained as habitat for

birds and other wildlife. The Preserve is located near the historic Erie Canal and is a great place to enjoy nature near the city.

**Trail surface:** Soil and boardwalks

**Special considerations:** Parking is along the road by the entrance.



## #landconservancychallenge

- Stella Niagara Preserve: Take a photo of yourself next to the water at the Stella Landing
- College Lodge Forest: Take a photo of the most beautiful flower you find
- Kennebec Scenic & Nature Preserve: Take a photo of yourself striking a pose on or near the rock wall overlooking the meadow behind the office
- Owens Falls Sanctuary: Take a photo of yourself seated on your favorite bench
- Mill Road Scenic Overlook: Take a photo with the beautiful scenic overlook in the background
- Nature View Park: Take a photo of a frog or toad. If you cannot find one on the trail, take a photo along any section of the trail
- Lytle Nature Preserve: Take a photo of a butterfly. If you cannot find one on the trail, take a photo with the meadow in the background