

TRAILS OF SWARTSWOOD STATE PARK

There are 9 official trails within the 3,460-acre Swartswood State Park. Most trails are located near Swartswood Lake, Duck Pond, and Spring Lake. One trail is located at the southwest corner of the park by Keen's Grist Mill. Another trail is located a few miles northwest of the office near Willow Crest Lake. Trails are short, easy to moderate in difficulty and explore the unique glaciated landscape of the region. All trails are multiuse except Grist Mill Trail. Horses are NOT permitted inside the main park area, on Grist Mill Trail or Emmons Path Trail.

Bear Claw Trail

Yellow • 0.7 miles • Multiuse

Easy to moderate • Follows forest above Duck Pond

Trailhead Duck Pond Trail. **Bear Claw Trail** is a short trail that travels through the forested terrain to the west of Duck Pond. Bear Claw Trail provides an alternate route along Duck Pond Trail, as both trails begin and end near the same location.

Duck Pond Trail

Black • 1.2 miles • Multiuse

Easy • Old roadway along Duck Pond

Trailhead Parking area across from park office on Route 619. **Duck Pond Trail** follows along the western edge of Duck Pond from Route 619 to Dove Island Road. The trail is a wide and flat paved road. Duck Pond is a woodland seasonal pond. Formed by glacial scouring, the pond is a depression in the forest with a dense soil layer that keeps water from draining easily. The pond provides habitat for several species of plants and animal life, including frogs, salamanders, and many bird species.

Emmons Path Trail

Orange • 1 mile • Hiking

Easy • Trail along lake edge

Trailhead Swartswood canoe launch. **Emmons Path Trail** travels along the northeast portion of Swartswood Lake through Emmons Grove picnic area under large hemlock trees. As it opens into a clearing, the trail turns away from the lake edge for a short distance then passes a large picnic shelter before turning northeast again to reach the campers' boat launch. Beyond the boat launch, the trail follows the paved campground road for a short distance before turning onto a woods road. Emmons Path Trail continues to Route 622. Across the road and to the left is Little Swartswood Lake parking area and boat launch.

Grist Mill Trail

Tan • 1.15 miles • Hiking

Easy • Explores hillside near historic mill

Trailhead Keen's Grist Mill parking area on Route 521. **Grist Mill Trail** starts at the mill and spillway at the southwest corner of Swartswood Lake. The grist mill was built by George Keen in 1838. The mill was turned by a 17-foot-wide wheel and ground 50 bushels of grain daily. The trail crosses to the east side of lake and turns north following single-track along the lake edge. Grist Mill Trail passes through cedar and hardwood forest with scenic views of the lake and Snake Island before turning east. The trail ascends a hillside and returns along a ridgeline to loop back to the mill.

Limestone Trail

White • 0.5 miles • Multiuse

Easy • Along east side of Duck Pond

Trailhead Spring Lake Trail or Duck Pond Trail. **Limestone Trail** travels along the east side of Duck Pond and connects Spring Lake Trail with Duck Pond Trail. Duck Pond is a seasonal water body, filling during wet times and remaining marshy at others. Limestone Trail leaves Spring Lake Trail and travels southwest before turning north and ending at the paved Duck Pond Trail.

Passage Trail

*Blue • 0.5 miles • Multiuse
Easy • Short connector trail*

Trailhead Spring Lake Trail. **Passage Trail** travels through forested landscape within the loop made by Spring Lake Trail connecting its east and west sides. The trail crosses rolling terrain with mixed pines and hardwood trees.

Sinkhole Trail

*Green • 0.5 miles • Multiuse
Easy • Short connector trail*

Trailhead Spring Lake Trail. **Sinkhole Trail** crosses the hilly landscape between Spring Lake and Duck Pond and connects with either side of the loop made by Spring Lake Trail. At the intersection of Spring Lake Trail, there is a scenic view along the length of Spring Lake.

Spring Lake Trail

*Red • 2.0 miles • Multiuse
Easy to moderate • Loop trail between two lakes*

Trailhead Across from park office on Route 619. **Spring Lake Trail** makes a loop through forested terrain between Spring Lake and Duck Pond. The trail begins along Route 619 and travels northeast through thick pine and cedar forest until reaching a small seasonal pond. The trail turns south along the west side of Spring Lake and passes Passage Trail and Sinkhole Trail. Continuing south and west, the trail passes a short connector trail that leads to Dove Island Road. After reaching Duck Pond, the trail turns northeast again and completes its loop.

Willow Crest Trail

*Teal • 3.05 miles • Multiuse
Moderate • Loop trail near Willow Crest Lake*

Trailhead Spring Brook access on Hampton Road. **Willow Crest Trail** makes a long loop through the forest and marsh land east of Willow Crest Lake. The trail starts traveling south into the forest adjacent to a stone wall then follows a marshy area along the outlet creek of Willow Crest Lake. Farther along, the trail divides to left and right to make a loop. One side travels along the lake edge, while the other side of the loop travels along an elevated hillside through open hardwood forest.

TRAIL SENSE AND SAFETY

Trail Markings: Official trails are marked by colored blazes on posts and trees. For habitat protection and your safety, please stay on the trails and don't alter trail markings or create new trails.

Horses: Riders must keep horses on trails where they are permitted.

Preparations: Consider bringing water, snacks, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a hat. Dress for the weather. Tell someone where you plan to go and when you'll return.

Hunting: Sections are open to hunting. Bright orange clothing is recommended during hunting season.

Pets: All pets must be on a leash (maximum 6') and under the physical control of the owner at all times. Please clean up after your pets.

Carry-in/Carry-out: Help keep the park clean and beautiful by carrying out your trash. Tick Protection: Bring insect repellent, wear light-colored clothing, tuck pants into socks, stay on trails, check yourself thoroughly, shower, and launder clothes immediately.

Bear Aware: Bears are active in this area. Don't approach them. Bear sightings should be reported to the State Park Police (1-877-927-6337) or to the park office.

Park Office Phone: 973-383-5230

Emergency Numbers: 1-877-WARN-DEP (1-877-927-6337) or 911

Swartswood State Park

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