

Looking for something to do with your little ones? Get Out and About!!

By Kathleen McDonald

Raymond is home to lots of recreational activities which are fun and free. Walking and Hiking trails with varying levels of difficulty can be found throughout the town. Here are a few easy walks/hikes.

1. **The Eco Center Trail** located beside the Lamprey River Elementary School. This self-guided closed loop trail runs parallel to the Lamprey River. There are observation stations placed along the trail. These stations explore wetlands, reptiles, water, birds, geology and their importance to the Lamprey River. There is a covered pavilion for picnics. The Eco Center is open on weekends and when school is not in session. Parking is located at the end of the dirt access road next to the school.
2. **The Rockingham Regional Rail Trail**. This former Boston and Maine railroad bed bisects Raymond. It runs, east from Epping, through Raymond and into Candia on the west. The rail trail is open to walkers, joggers, strollers, non-motorized bikes, and horseback riders. During winter months you can snowshoe, cross country ski, snow mobile and dog sled. The rail trail is open year-round. Dogs are allowed but must be on a leash. There are access points to the rail trail on Prescott Road, Old Manchester Road, beside Ben Franklin & Dunkin's, at the Depot, and Cammett Field. (There is a culvert running under Onway Lake Road where bikers will have to dismount and walk their bikes through). This lovely rail trail crosses the Lamprey River, passes the train depot, and Onway Lake where you might see a loon. On summer weekends, stop by for an ice cream at the Depot. Parking is limited at the access points, but there is parking in

downtown, on Depot Road in Candia, and at the end of Joshua Lane in Epping. Joshua Lane is just over the town line and a short walk through the conservation area will take you to the rail trail.

3. **Cassier Forest Pond Trail.** This pretty loop trail is part of the Cassier Memorial Forest Conservation Land and is open year-round. There are many other trails here, but the loop trail is the easiest for little ones. This gently graded trail crosses a small brook which feeds a small pond. There is a large rock with a flat area to fish or picnic. While on your walk keep your eyes open for deer footprints, pitcher plants and blueberry bushes. You might even see one of the many songbirds living here. Access to this trail is at the end of Briar Road to the left of the kiosk. Parking is limited and the trail is difficult for bikes and strollers.

4. **Robinson Hill.** Is also one of Raymond's Conservation Areas, it is located off of Route 107 on Robinson Hill Road. The gravel parking area has room for about 6 vehicles with limited access during the winter months. This loop trail is a bit steeper than the last three walks and is not recommended for strollers. It begins to the right of the kiosk, winds upward through a forest of hardwoods, and continues toward the boulder fields. Be on the lookout for: vernal pools, porcupines, turkeys, woodpeckers, mushrooms, and strange plant life growing on the boulders.

I hope you and your family enjoy these easy walks, out and about in Raymond. For information on other walks on the town's conservation lands, visit the Raymond Conservation Commission page. <https://www.raymondnh.gov/conservation-commission>

