

# The Crooked Creek Preserve    A Changing Landscape    A Place for Wildlife    Home of the Macsherry Trail

The Crooked Creek Preserve consists of nearly 2,200 acres situated along the largest Class 1 wetland in the Thousand Islands region.

Thousand Islands Land Trust's "Signature Preserves"

Wellesley Island Preserve

Grindstone Island Preserves & Nature Trail

Chippewa Bay Preserve

Crooked Creek Preserve & Macsherry Trail

Otter Creek Preserve & Nature Trail

S. Gerald Ingerson Preserve & Rivergate Trail

Clayton

Foster-Blake Woods Preserve

Zenda Farms Preserve & MacFarlane Trail

Learn more online at [TILandTrust.org](http://TILandTrust.org)

### Why We Conserve

The wetlands and adjacent uplands in the Crooked Creek Preserve provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and songbirds. The marshes and bays are essential spawning, nursery and feeding habitats for many species of fish, amphibians and reptiles.

Wetlands provide areas for water to collect and currents to slow down in times of flooding, preventing erosion. Wetlands are also a natural filter; particles of silt and sand settle out of the water as the current slows. Aquatic plants and natural chemical processes remove harmful pollutants from the water, improving the water quality. Wetlands also provide ideal nesting grounds for waterfowl and songbirds including ducks, geese and blackbirds.

Contiguous uplands provide habitat for nesting songbirds and other woodland wildlife. These larger tracts also provide wildlife corridors for animals to move from northern areas, such as Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario, south to the Adirondack Park.

Macsherry Trail  
Crooked Creek Brochure  
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All Illustrations by Robert McNamara of The Art of Wilderness

Driving Directions From Rt 12 Turn north at Kring Point State Park. Take Immediate right onto Indian Point Road. Proceed about 3/4 mile and turn right into parking area. **The road beyond the parking area is a private drive.**

**1000 ISLANDS LAND TRUST**  
Live. Learn. Conserve.

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The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT)

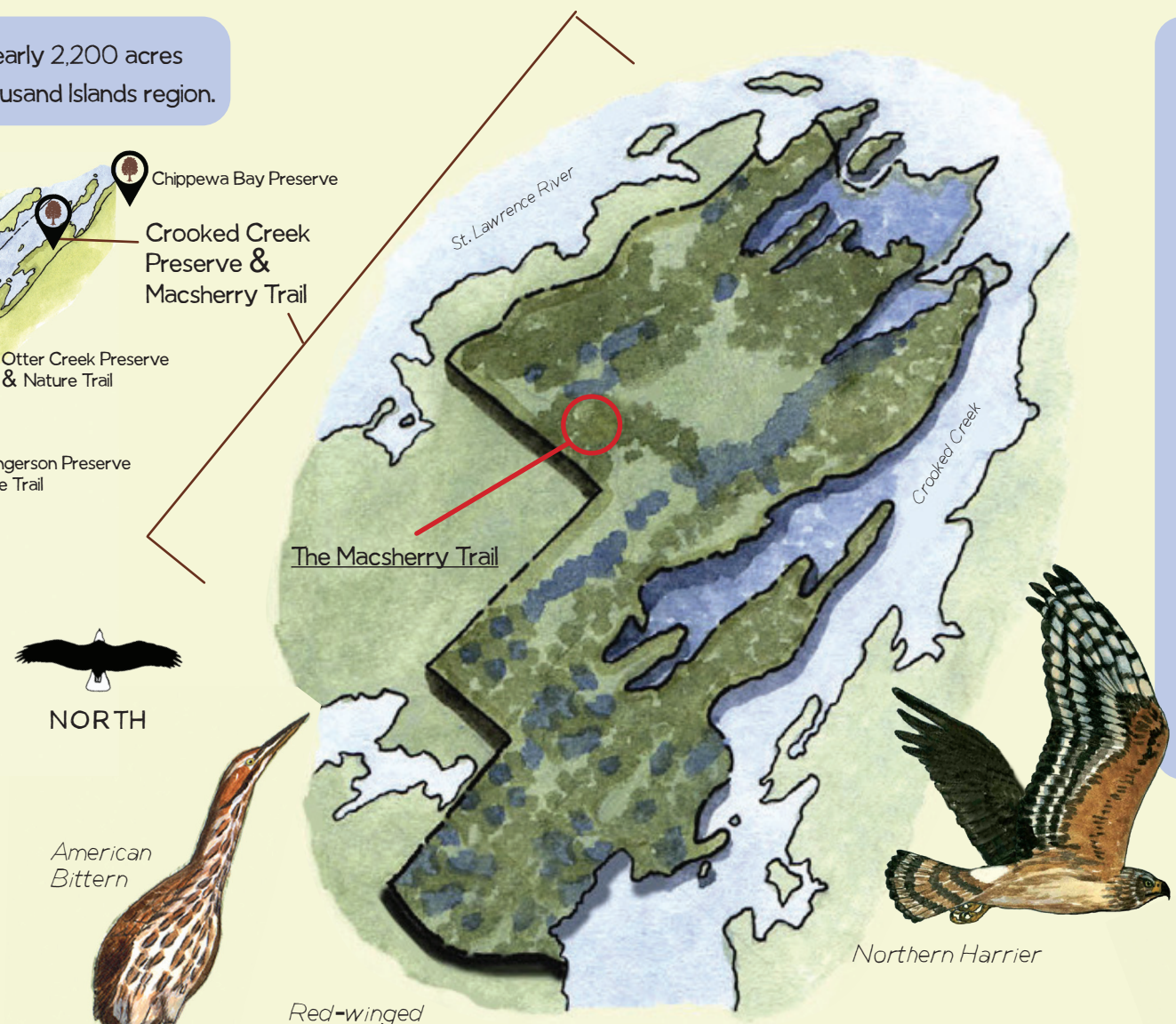
Crooked Creek Preserve

Macsherry Trail

TRAIL GUIDE

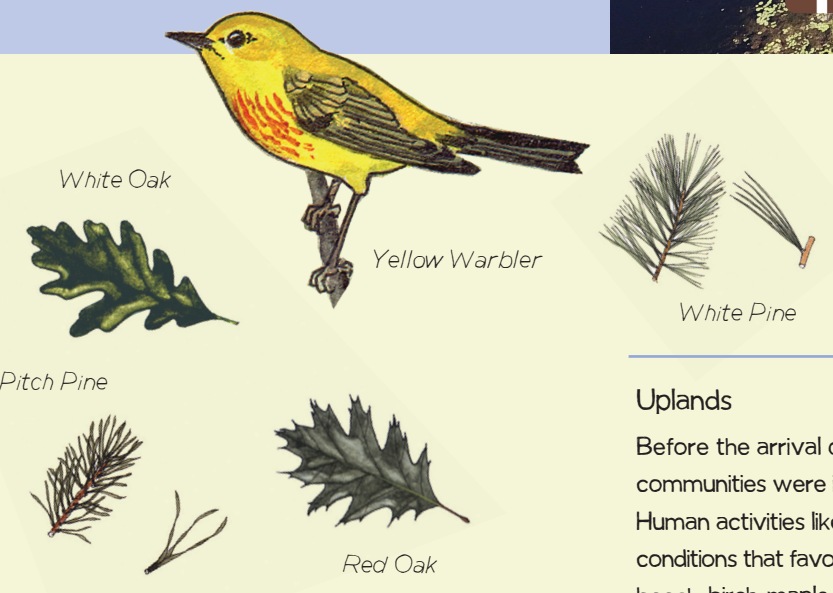
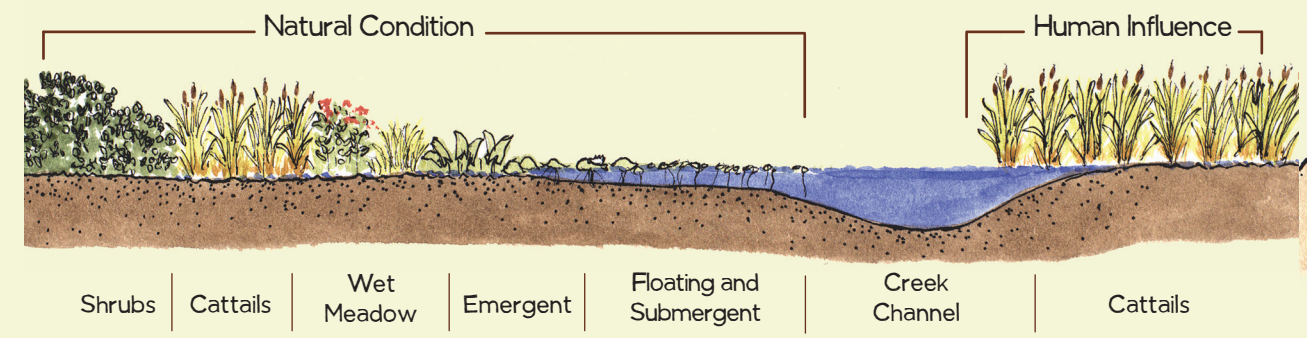
CROOKED CREEK PRESERVE

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### Wetlands

Human activities cause changes in species diversity in both wetlands and uplands. Due to dams and dredged channels, seasonal water levels in the Thousand Islands have stabilized, creating conditions that favor mono-cultural plant communities, thereby reducing the opportunity for diversity of native plants and animal species.

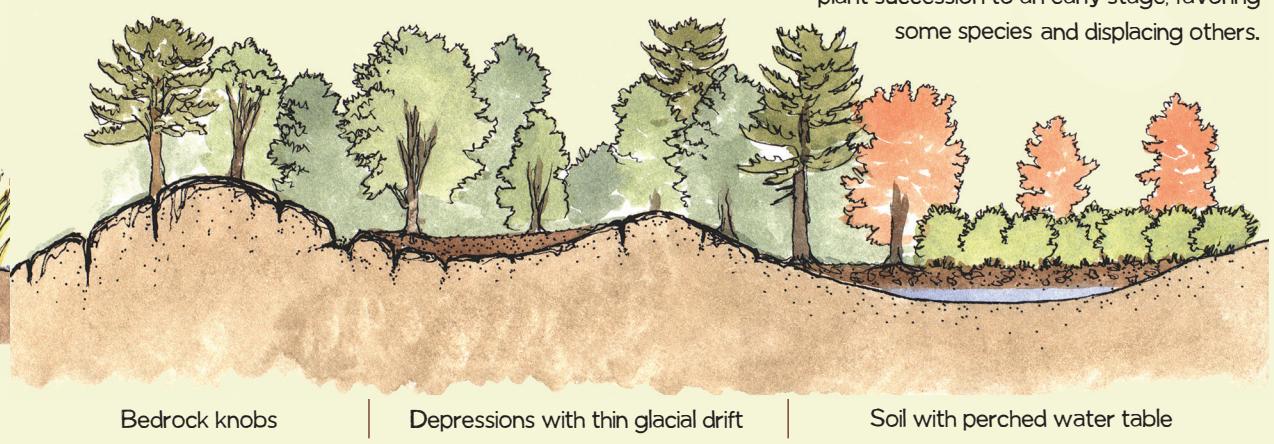


### Which Pine Is Which?

White Pines have 5 needles per cluster (like the 5 letters in the word W-H-I-T-E) while other pine species have 2 - 3 needles per cluster.

### Uplands

Before the arrival of humans, the locations of plant communities were influenced strongly by soil conditions. Human activities like logging, grazing and fires create conditions that favor oaks and pitch pine over the natural beech-birch-maple forest. These disturbances set back plant succession to an early stage, favoring some species and displacing others.

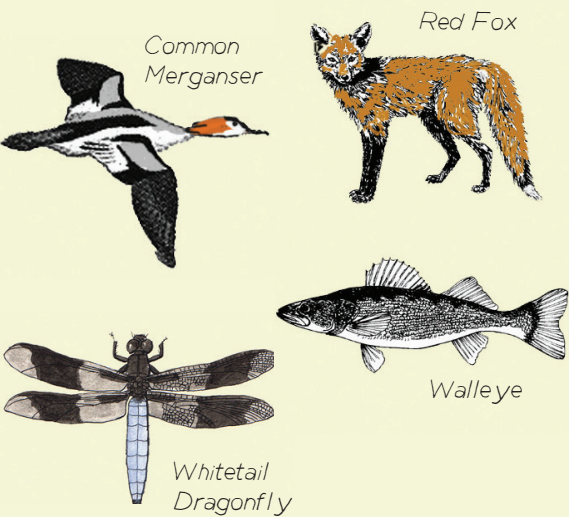




The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) is...  
*Working to conserve the natural beauty, diverse wildlife habitats, water quality and outdoor recreation opportunities of the Thousand Islands region, for present and future generations!*

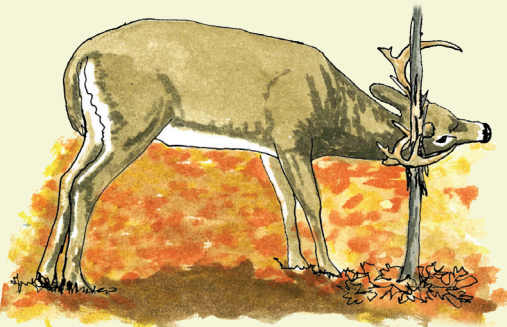
The Macsherry Trail consists of a short loop of about 1.5 miles, and a long loop of nearly 3 miles. The mosaic of wetland and forest plant communities found here provides critical habitat for abundant fish, mammal, reptile, amphibian and invertebrate species.

Woods, Water & Air: Habitat for All!



Dense Thickets

Have you ever been surprised on the edge of a thicket by a bird taking off right under your feet? There are several possible culprits, but it could be a Ruffed Grouse. These birds nest in shrubby areas and generally spend most of their time on the ground, rather than in trees. The Ruffed Grouse is a chicken-like, mottled brown bird. During mating season (end of March to mid-June, with the peak being early April) Ruffed Grouse males beat one of their wings on a log, producing an accelerating drumming sound, to attract females.



All Illustrations by Robert McNamara of The Art of Wilderness

COVER TYPES

- Forested Wetland — [Red Maple, Alder, Willow]
- Appalachian Oak/Pine Forest — [Red and White Oak, White and Pitch Pine, Blueberry]
- Emergent Marsh — [Cattail, Cinquefoil, Wild Rice]
- Submergent Marsh — [Bladderwort, Coontail, Water Celery]
- Shrub Swamp — [Alder, Willow, Sedge, Bullrush]



NORTH

YOU ARE HERE  
Parking Area & Trailhead



Open Woodlands

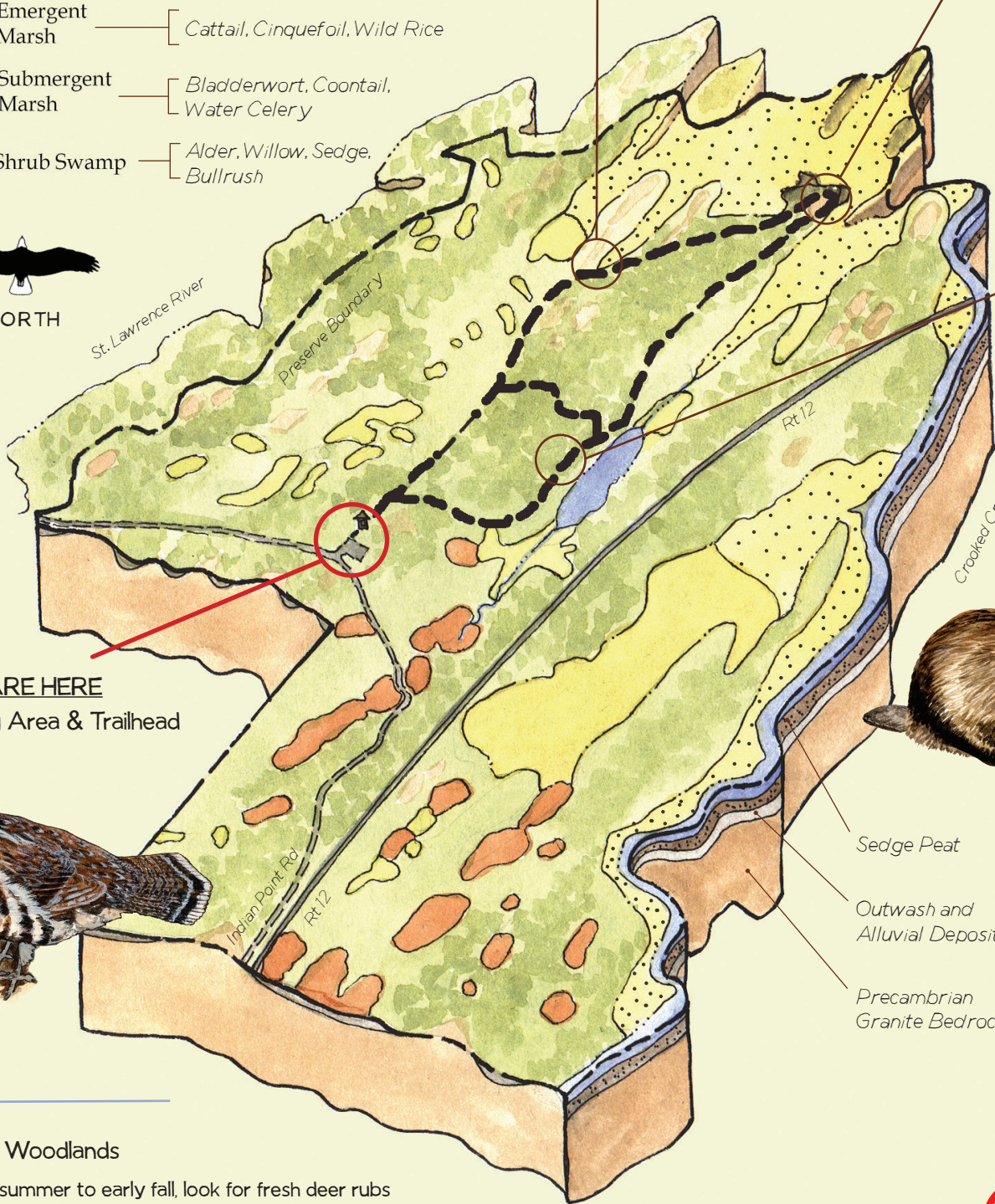
In late summer to early fall, look for fresh deer rubs on trees at about chest height. This occurs when male deer rub the velvet off of their newly acquired antlers, leaving a scent which both challenges other male deer in the area and attracts potential female mates.

Large Fallen Pine

You've probably noticed the fallen pine trees along the path with their soil-filled roots exposed. This is due to the bedrock foundation and lack of sod in the area. These pines grow in very little soil, causing their roots



to grow out, as opposed to down into the ground. The notorious ice storm of 1998 was most likely responsible for the large fallen pines.



The Macsherry Trail was established through the generosity of the Macsherry family and friends in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of life-long North Country residents Dick & Mary Macsherry.

The Crooked Creek Overlook

At last - Crooked Creek! Common Terns, American and Least Bitterns may be seen looking for a meal of fish in the creek. The American Bittern is known as the "Thunder Pumper" due to the **oong-KA-chonk** call it makes. The Least Bittern is a very small bird that is more often heard than seen as it feeds in the cattails. Its call is a very soft **coo-coo-coo** and may be easily missed. The Common Tern has a wide repertoire of calls, with the most distinctive being the alarmed **KEE-yah**. All three are included on the New York State List of Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern Species.

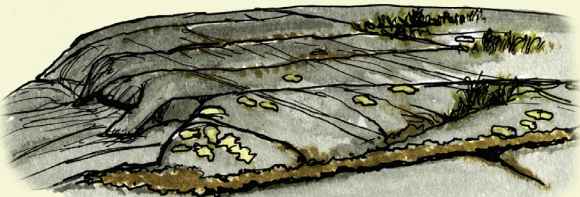
Beaver Pond and Viewing Platform

Keep watch for chewed off stumps and narrow trails leading off the path, especially as you near the pond - a sure sign that beavers have been here! Beavers use wood for food (the inner bark of willow and birch are favorites), to trim their teeth and to build their dams. A viewing platform and bench was constructed by TILT's Stewardship Staff, so enjoy the view of the impressive beaver dam!



Rock Formations

Rock in the Thousand Islands region has a distinct look. This area is part of what is called the Frontenac Arch, which links the Canadian shield to the Adirondacks. The pinkish rock of the Frontenac Arch is approximately 600 million years older than the sandstone (gritty and reddish colored) and limestone (gray layered rocks) that are found in most of this area. The glaciers eroded the overlying, softer layers of rock, leaving only the harder rock behind. Striations from glacial activity can still be seen gouged into large rocks along the trail.



Preserve Rules: Preserve open sunrise to sunset • Stay on trail • No motorized vehicles  
• No camping, dumping, fires, or collecting flora & fauna • Keep pets on a leash • No trapping • Hunting by permit only



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The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization created in 1985 to conserve the natural beauty, diverse wildlife habitats, water quality and outdoor recreation opportunities of the Thousand Islands region, for present and future generations!

TILT is supported by donations from people who care about the Thousand Islands region of the St. Lawrence River. Our conservation work is only possible through the generosity of our supporters.

Donations of land, conservation easements, and financial resources to TILT are tax deductible under provisions of the Internal Revenue code. To find out more about donating land, creating a conservation easement, or including TILT in your will, please call us at 315-686-5345.



Donate today!