

# Clark Reservation STATE PARK



6105 E. Seneca Turnpike  
Jamesville, NY 13078-9516  
Park Office: (315) 492-1590  
Fax: (315) 492-1908



## Emergency Phone Numbers

Medical, Fire, Police Emergency.....911  
Park Police (Emergency).....1-877-851-6086  
Park Police (Administration).....315-492-6422  
Park Office.....315-492-1590

## Facilities

365 Acres; 10 Acre Lake  
Two Picnic Shelters (Reservable) 315-492-1756  
Playground and Playing Fields  
Picnic Areas with Tables and Fireplaces  
Trails

## Activities

Hiking  
Fishing  
Nature Center and Programs

## Nature Center-Native Garden

The Nature Center is open seasonally from the beginning of May through Labor Day. Park visitors are encouraged to stop by the Nature Center, which is operated by Park Friends. There, they will learn more about the natural history of the park through fossil and wildlife exhibits. The Center contains a small library of field guides and information on the flora, fauna, and geology of Clark Reservation, including exhibits of birds, mammals, insects, and fossils.

All guided nature walks begin at the Nature Center. Before you hike, stop by and check the window for times of operation and for scheduled programs.



## Accessibility

Accessible parking spaces, comfort stations, picnic shelters, and picnic tables are available within the park and are marked. Please contact the park office for specific information.



## Carry In - Carry Out

**Day Use Patrons:** Please comply with the stated Carry-In, Carry-Out Policy. Please take all your garbage with you when you leave the park. Garbage bags are available at the ticket booth. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Park History

### "Geologic Wonder of the Last Ice Age"

Clark Reservation State Park is located in Onondaga County, five miles southeast of the city of Syracuse, and 1-1/4 miles west of the village of Jamesville. Approximately 365 acres in size, this park is administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Central Region, whose headquarters are located here.

The park is near the edge of the northern escarpment of the Appalachian Plateau on the divide between Onondaga Valley to the west and Butternut Valley to the east.

Central New York State was occupied by Algonquin Indians until the end of the 13th century. At one time, the lake at Clark Reservation had an Indian name, "Kai-yah-koo", which means "satisfied with tobacco." According to legend, an Indian woman who lost her child in the lake would come each autumn to cast tobacco in the water. This would appease the evil spirits and encourage the Great Spirit to watch over the child.

All of the land that we know as Clark Reservation State Park was at one time divided into military tracts. This land was surveyed in 1792 and given for compensation to soldiers of the Revolutionary War. None of these tracts was ever claimed, however, and the land passed into the hands of private owners.

The park area was explored by early botanists and geologists who delighted in its fascinating natural history. In 1878, James McFarlane of Pennsylvania bought several parcels around the lake and developed the area as a summer resort. He built a small hotel, laid out walks and built stairs down to the lake so that visitors could enjoy a rowboat ride. The resort, however, failed to attract enough guests, and the property passed through the hands of other private owners.

Clark Reservation, as a public park, had its beginning in 1915, when Mary Clark Thompson of New York City purchased the 108 acres surrounding the lake. Mrs. Thompson believed in the park's preservation because of its scenic beauty and geological interest. She donated the land to the people of New York as a memorial to her father, Myron Clark, who had been governor of New York from 1855 to 1857. Clark Reservation officially became a state park in 1926.

## Geology

The glacially produced features and numerous fossils found in the ancient limestone bedrock are one of the park's biggest attractions.

400 million years ago, most of the United States was covered by a shallow saline sea. It was during this period that the limestone strata at Clark Reservation were laid down. These layers of limestone contain the fossil remains of plants and animals which lived millions of years ago, including honeycomb and horn corals, brachiopods, and sponges.

More recently, about 20,000 years ago, the last of several glacial advances occurred in this area. A mile-thick ice sheet extended from Canada to Pennsylvania. About 10,000 years ago, this glacier began to retreat. During its recession, meltwater torrents carved out spectacular features at Clark Reservation, including the glacial plunge pool basin (containing the lake) and a system of amphitheaters and ravines.

Geologists speculate that the glacial waterfall contained a volume of water greater than the American Falls at Niagara. The lake which occupies the plunge basin is classified as a glacial cataract lake, and is one of the finest examples of its kind in eastern North America.

## Good Manners

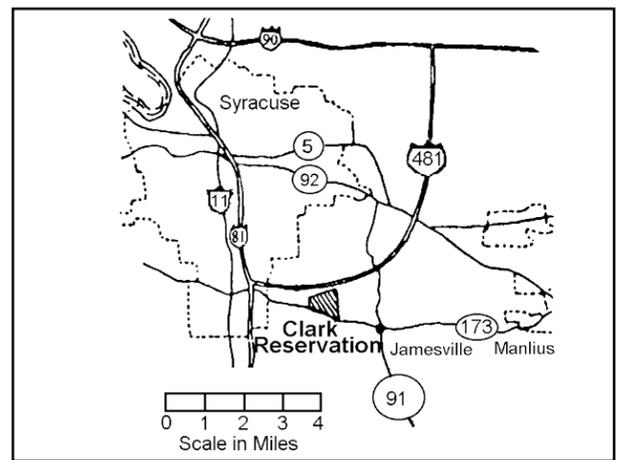
Be respectful of others by keeping noise to a minimum level and keeping your picnic area clean, and litter-free. Litter leads to more litter. Don't be the first to drop it!

**It is illegal to collect anything on state lands.** This includes all plants, animals, fossils, and rocks.

Pets are welcome, but must be properly licensed. Proof of a current rabies vaccination must be presented. Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than six (6) feet, and must never be left unattended.

## Safe Hiking

**Park closes at dark.** When hiking, always carry a map with you. The park terrain is very rugged and contains many crevices. Wet or dry, limestone is slippery. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear when hiking. Do not throw objects over the cliff or fence, as there is a trail below. Please stay on the trails.



## Directions

**SYRACUSE:** Rt. 481 South to Jamesville Exit; Jamesville Road to Rt. 173; Rt. 173 West 1.25 miles to the park entrance.

**BUFFALO-ROCHESTER:** Thruway (I-90) East to Exit 34A; Rt. 481 South to Jamesville Exit, then same as above.

**NEW YORK and ALBANY:** Thruway (I-90) West to Exit 34A; Rt. 481 South to Jamesville Exit, then same as above.

## Park Patron Alert

Incidents of rabies are on the rise in New York State. Please do not feed, entice, or harass raccoons, or other wildlife. If you notice any animals that appear ill, or are acting in a strange manner contact park staff immediately. Report any bites, scratches, or other contact with a wild or domestic animal to park staff.

**Regional Office: 315-492-1756**

[www.nysparks.com](http://www.nysparks.com)



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**

*Produced by JMF Publishing,  
30 Burr Ave, New York Mills, NY 13417  
as a service for visitors to the Central Region of the New York  
State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
For sponsorship information call 315-768-7137*

## The Lake

The lake at Clark Reservation is meromictic, one of only a few such lakes in the United States. A meromictic lake is one in which the surface waters and bottom waters do not mix. Mixing occurs in most lakes during spring and fall "turnover".

The lake at Clark Reservation is 10 acres in size, and measures about 60 feet at its deepest point. Fishing is permitted; the lake contains pickerel, bullheads, and sunfish. Painted turtles may be seen basking in the sun. The swampy south shore is a good place to observe cedar waxwings, kingfishers, and woodpeckers.

## Botany

Clark Reservation is botanically rich. More than 300 species of ferns and flowering plants, including several rare species, are known to exist in the park.

In the early 1800's, a botanist discovered a rare fern growing in the park. Since then, both professional and amateur botanists have come to enjoy the diverse plant life, which includes more than 80 types of trees and shrubs and many species of moss adorning the magnificent limestone outcrops. During spring, summer and fall, many species of wildflowers can be seen along the park trails.



## Wildlife

During various times of the year, the park is home to more than 140 species of birds, including the uncommon winter wren. The lucky hiker may hear its beautiful song ringing down the limestone cliffs. Pileated woodpecker, rosebreasted grosbeak, scarlet tanager, ruffed grouse and many species of warblers are commonly seen by park visitors.

## Where to Hike

### GENERAL NATURE WALK

Here is a good nature hike to get an overall picture of the natural features of the park: Take the steps to the lake; bear left (north), go 1/2 way around the lake at lake level; take trail to top of the cliff; bear left, completing the circle around the lake on the north cliff rim trail. There is a ledge overlook on the trail high above the lake; a scenic rest stop. Allow 2 hours for a medium paced walk.

TRAIL	TERRAIN
Cliff Trail; Steps	Difficult
Cliff Trail; Steps	Difficult
Stairs to Lake	Mod.-Difficult
Faust Woodland Trail	Easy-Moderate
Long Trail	Easy
Faust Meadow Trail	Easy
Cliff Trail	Difficult
M. Faust Woodland Trail	Easy-Moderate
Long Trail	Moderate-Diff.
Saddle Back Trail	Moderate
Pulpit Rock Trail	Difficult
Long Trail	Moderately
Northeast extension	Difficult
Cliff Trail	
Dry Lake Area	Easy-Moderate
Glacier Lake	
Cliff Rim	

\* Stairs leading to Lake Trail are closed during the winter.

- Trails have many limestone crevices. Please exercise caution and wear proper footwear.
- Please avoid walking on mosses as they are fragile. They aid in soil erosion and formation.

### Park Features: Fossils/Geology.

Glacial cataract strata, Wildflowers, Ferns, Trees, Birds

Trail Name	Trail Color	Trail Length
Big Buck Trail	White	.3 miles
Cliff Trail	Light Blue	.6 miles
Dry Lake Trail	Red	.14 miles
Lake Trail	Green	.64 miles
Long Trail	Red	.95 miles
Lower Basin Trail	Light Blue	.1 miles
Mildred Faust Trail	Green	.95 miles
Pulpit Rock Trail	Yellow	.5 miles
Saddle Back Trail	Red	.2 miles
Table Rock Trail	Yellow	.1 miles
Switchback Trail	Green	.3 miles
Swamp Trail	Green	.15 miles
Long Trail Ext.	Red	.36 miles
Powerline Trail		.36 miles

### Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited in all park buildings and structures, as well as on or near playgrounds, beaches, bathhouses, group activities or any other designated non-smoking areas.

## Do You ♥Clark Reservation?

The Friends of Clark Reservation, a non-profit volunteer organization operating under the auspices of the Council of Park Friends, maintains the Nature Center and offers naturalist guided activities and events through the generosity of its members.

### Please consider joining or donating today

Annual memberships start at just \$20. Make your check payable to 'Council of Park Friends' or visit our website at <http://www.councilofparkfriends.org> where you can also view our newsletter.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Friends of Clark Reservation, 6105 E. Seneca Tpke  
 Jamesville, NY 13078

Email: [friendsofclarkreservation@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofclarkreservation@gmail.com)



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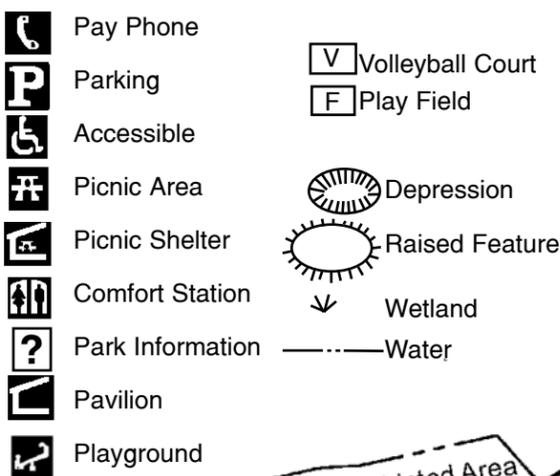
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### Rules/Reminders

- Boats, swimming and ice fishing are prohibited. Bikes only allowed on Long Trail.
- Park Hours are 7:00 am to Sunset.
- Dogs must be on a six-foot leash at all times.
- It is illegal to collect anything on state lands. This includes all plants, animals, fossils, and rocks.

### KEY



### Trail Blaze Key

- (W) White
- (B) Blue
- (R) Red
- (G) Green
- (Y) Yellow

