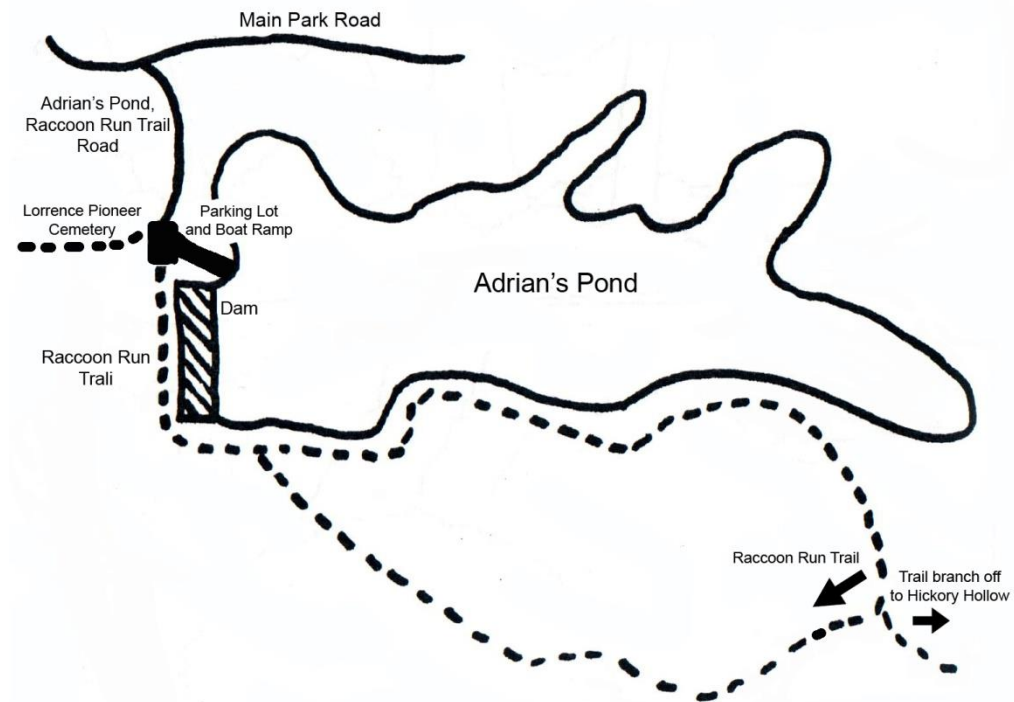


Raccoon Run Trail Guide and Map



"To assure our people permanent access to their outdoor heritage"

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Welcome to Raccoon Run Trail! The trail loop is easy hiking and approximately 3/4-mile in length. It will loop back to the main parking lot. There is a trail access from the Hickory Hollow parking area as well.

Thank you for hiking Raccoon Run Trail! You may keep the trail guide or return it to the box for others to use!

This trail guide serves a general overview of the trail as you begin the hike from the Adrian's Pond Parking Lot area.

At the main parking lot area, there is a small trail that leads to and ends at Lorrence Pioneer Cemetery. The pioneers settled in Vermilion County around 1819. Many of the people buried in this cemetery are believed to have died from "milk fever," contracted from poisons passed from cow's milk after they consumed the snake root plant. Only a few names of those buried in Lorrence Cemetery are known. Those have been taken from carved headstones. The cedar trees bordering the property are believed to have been planted by the early settlers as part of their cultural traditions.



Back on Raccoon Run Trail, you first pass over the dam built to create Adrian's Pond. The edge where a pond meets the forest or grassland has more varieties of plants, which in turn increases the number of animal species that can be found in the area. Look around: how many different plants do you see? What animals might you see visiting the pond? Examples of pond plants that can be found here are pondweed, pond lilies, and cattails. These plants provide homes and resting places for aquatic animals such as tadpoles, minnows, and dragonflies. You may even encounter Canada geese, mallard ducks, and muskrats at the pond.

After crossing the dam, you will enter into the forest. The trail will split with one path following the edge of the pond and the other into the forest. This guide follows the path along the pond.

From time to time, beavers have visited Adrian's Pond. If you look closely at the bottoms of the trees by the pond, you may

find trees that have chew marks from the beavers. Some tree trunks may have the trademark "pencil point" top indicating a beaver chewed the tree down years ago.



The trail leaves the edge of the pond and you are now surrounded by the forest. The tall trees found along Raccoon Run Trail are mainly shagbark hickory, white oak, and black oak. Can you find a tree with shaggy bark? While hiking through this area, be sure to listen for birds, including the tapping of woodpeckers hunting for insects underneath the tree bark.



Some of the smaller trees growing under the hickory and oaks are red buds and sassafras trees. Red Bud trees are most easily seen in the spring when its purple blossoms open up before the leaves appear. The leaves have a distinct heart shape. Sassafras trees are a unique tree in that one can find three different leaf shapes: a mitten, a fork, and a smooth blade - all on the same tree! Sassafras tree branches are green in color as well. Can you find both the red bud and sassafras trees?

Dead trees, play an important role in the ecosystem of a forest. Once a tree dies, it starts a slow process of changing into the soil. Wind, rain, plants, and animals all play a part in this change. As a tree decays on the ground, one may find salamanders, centipedes, earthworms, snails, and mushrooms. How many animals and mushrooms can you find on or under the fallen logs?

