

Hours of Operation

Located in Dundas on Fallsview Road, this area is open to public from 9:00 a.m. to sundown. An admission fee applies. For more information about the park, please call Christie Lake Conservation Area at 905-628-3060. Visit our website at: [www.conservationhamilton.ca](http://www.conservationhamilton.ca) or email us at: [christie@conservationhamilton.ca](mailto:christie@conservationhamilton.ca) or call our information line at 1-888-319-4722.

Webster's Falls Entrance GPS Coordinates:

Longitude 79.9808    Latitude 43.2772    Easting 582700    Northing 4792099

Tew's Falls Entrance GPS Coordinates:

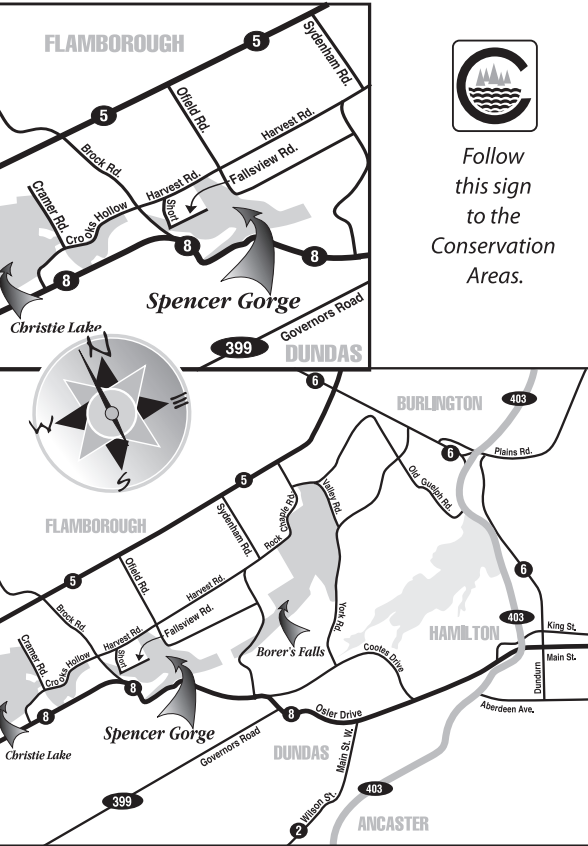
Longitude 79.9797    Latitude 43.2818    Easting 582779    Northing 4792609

Directions...

*From Toronto:* Take Highway 403 to Highway 6 North; turn left onto Hwy. 5 West. Turn south (left) onto Brock Road. Turn east (left) at the flashing light, onto Harvest Road. Turn right onto Short Road and left onto Fallsview Road and follow the signs for the parking lot. For Dundas Peak and Tew's Falls lookout parking, follow Harvest Road further down until you see the signs.

*From Hamilton:* Take Highway 8 North from Dundas. Veer right onto Brock Road then turn right at the flashing light onto Harvest Road. Turn right onto Short Road and left onto Fallsview Road and follow the signs for the parking lot. For Dundas Peak and Tew's Falls lookout parking, follow Harvest Road further down until you see the signs.

Buses & oversized vehicles must use the Tew's Falls parking lot.

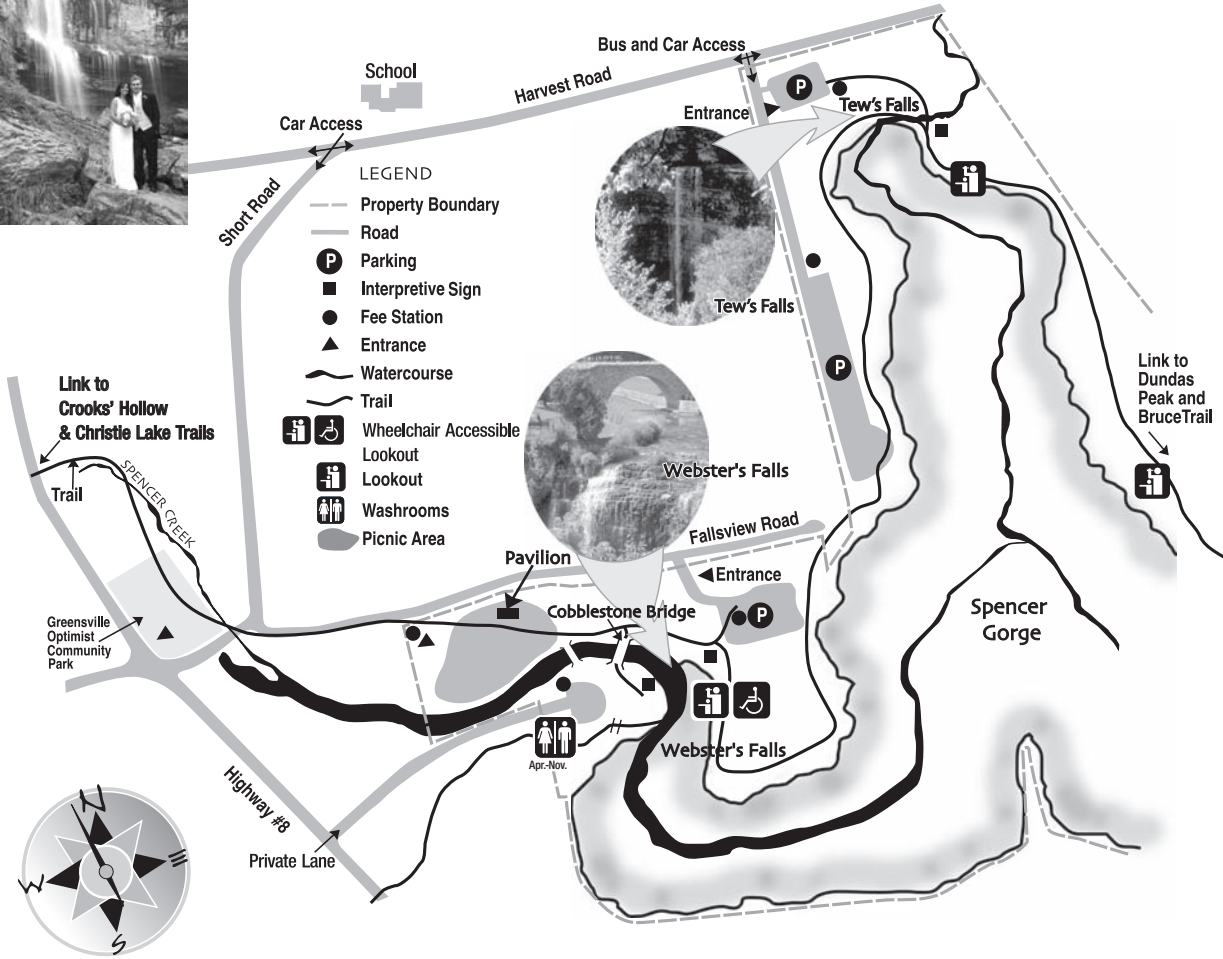


Spencer Gorge (Tew's Falls)/ Webster's Falls Conservation Area

Hamilton Conservation Authority



Healthy Streams...Healthy Communities!



The Hamilton Conservation Authority is a corporate body established under the Conservation Authorities Act of Ontario, to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of resources, including water, in partnership with member municipalities and the Province. Water is the essential element necessary to all life, and how our communities prosper depends, to a large extent, on how we manage this all-important resource.

The Hamilton Conservation Authority assumes no responsibility for personal injury or loss or damage to vehicles or personal property of any kind.



This brochure is printed on recycled paper and can be recycled. Printed in 2012.

So our visitors can enjoy their stay, we ask that you observe the following:

1. Please do not deface, remove or damage any property, plants, birds or mammals in the conservation area.
2. Please place your garbage in containers provided. Recyclable materials should be placed in recycling containers.
3. For the protection of the wildlife, please keep your pets on leashes at all times.
4. Vending, soliciting and advertising are not allowed, except by written permission of the Hamilton Conservation Authority.
5. Alcohol use and possession is prohibited.
6. Firearms, hunting and trapping are forbidden.
7. Motorists must observe the posted speed limits and park in the designated areas. Use of all motor vehicles is confined to roads and parking lots.
8. This is a Niagara Escarpment property with steep banks, cliffs and waterfalls. Please do not leave children unattended.

Spencer Gorge (Tew’s Falls)/  
Webster’s Falls Conservation Area

From escarpment brow panoramas, to the forested depths below, the Spencer Gorge (Tew’s Falls)/Webster’s Falls Conservation Area exhibits the physical features that have made the Niagara Escarpment one of Ontario’s most spectacular geological formations.

This significant natural area contains two picturesque waterfalls: Webster’s and Tew’s Falls. Webster’s is a magnificent curtain waterfall and Tews, a ribbon falls which towers at 41 metres, is only a few metres lower than Niagara Falls. Both offer spectacular vistas of the gorge.

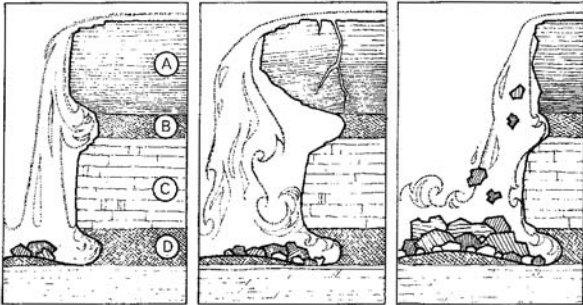
A nature trail accesses Dundas Peak, providing stunning views of Dundas and Hamilton. Other footpaths include the Bruce Trail and a side-trail to historic Crooks’ Hollow Conservation Area. As seasons change, vistas range from the sparkle of ice on the frozen waterfalls, to the vivid fall colours you’ll find in the Hamilton area.



Geology

The various rock layers embedding the escarpment can be seen at Webster’s and Tew’s Falls. These layers are deposits of mud, silt, and mud from the floors of primeval seas that covered portions of this continent. This building up of sedimentary material started about 450 million years ago and ended about 150 million years later, or during the Silurian and Ordovician periods. The older Ordovician layers are the reddish shales near the base of the rock face, not visible everywhere on the escarpment. Above these shales are the Silurian rocks that make up the major part of the escarpment face.

Fossilized remains of various aquatic plants and animals can be found in rocks along the escarpment. As the water cascades over the hard dolomite limestone, it washes against the soft shales underneath, wearing it away. This causes the upper layers to be undermined, so they overhang and eventually break off and plummet to the bottom of the cliff, forming a talus slope and leaving a vertical face once again. In the case of Webster’s and Tew’s Falls, most of the present gorges were carved out by glacial meltwaters about 10,000 years ago when the creek’s water volume was much greater and stream erosion consequently much more active. The little creeks that now occupy the valleys are obviously unequal to such a mighty task of excavation.



Section through Tew’s Falls showing how the vertical rock face is maintained.

A Limestone	B Soft shale
C Hard limestone and dolomite	D Soft Queenston shale

Biology

The mature forests of the gorge, talus slopes, and steep cliffs provide habitat for many plants and animals. More than 500 different plants have been found by botanists, including several rare species:

- ◆ American chestnut ◆ Red mulberry
- ◆ Ginseng ◆ Slender satin grass
- ◆ Yellow mandarin ◆ Perfoliate bellwort

Aggressive non-native trees such as Norway maple and European buck-thorn have invaded some of these forests; however, they remain mostly undisturbed and can be seen stretching from Copetown to Waterdown. On the steep cliffs, eastern white cedars grow from crevices in the rock strata. Some of these twisted trees grow slowly because of limited nutrients and water. However, they can attain a great age. Two of them are more than 500 years old. They grow almost side-by-side on the cliff beside Webster’s Falls. These old white cedars are

just part of an "ancient forest" recently assessed along the entire Niagara Escarpment by the Cliff Ecology Research Group of University of Guelph. Above the cedars and growing along the rim of the gorge are trees, wildflowers, and grasses adapted to the dry, thin soils found here. Scattered red oaks as well as a few of the rare Chinquapin oak are suited to these conditions. There are also prairie grasses here – big bluestem and little bluestem – and other plants like New Jersey tea and downy yellow false foxglove which thrive in these harsh conditions. The foxglove is one of the rarest (and most attractive) wildflowers in the Spencer Gorge. Hamilton Conservation Authority is managing the rim forest in two locations to create favourable conditions for the prairie grasses and wildflowers.

Down in the gorge, along the fast flowing streams, another rarity makes its presence known every spring with a loud song. The Louisiana waterthrush, a little warbler that builds its nest within the tangled roots of a streamside tree, walks the water’s edge, feeding on insects in the water and on land. It is a species found only in habitats like this and restricted to southwestern Ontario. Many other birds nest here – orioles, tanagers, other warblers, thrushes, flycatchers, sparrows, vultures, and many more. The diversity of birds is a direct result of the diversity of habitats. During fall, many hawks follow the updraft along the gorge on their migration south. Dundas Peak is a good place to see them as they soar past. Under the rocks on the talus slopes of the gorge are many little amphibians and reptiles. Red-backed salamanders are common and the scarce ring-necked snake has also been seen nearby as well as rare snails. Spencer Gorge (Tew’s Falls)/Webster’s Falls is truly one of Hamilton’s finest natural areas.



*Yours to Enjoy...and Protect*

Ask how you can get your Rewards!



How to Enjoy this Conservation Area

Spencer Gorge (Tew’s Falls)/Webster’s Falls is nestled in the quaint and quiet community of Greensville. It is a very significant and beautiful Escarpment property that lends itself to passive use. The area offers a picnic shelter and tables, washroom facilities and several walking paths, including Bruce Trail access. There are also several lookout points for viewing Tew’s and Webster’s Falls. It is a popular spot for photographers of all ages and skills, and a lovely location for memorable wedding photos. To book your wedding photos call: 905-628-3060.

Limitations to Use

The safety of its users and environmental protection is very important in a conservation area. Ancient plants and rare cedars struggle to survive. Therefore the Hamilton Conservation Authority has a policy of not allowing rappelling, and limiting climbing use to ice climbing by groups and schools with permission. In addition, the area’s steep cliffs and fast-flowing waters in the spring require visitors and especially guardians of children to be watchful.

Fees

A fee is charged for entrance to the park. These fees go towards maintenance and improvements of the conservation areas so that visitors and their families can enjoy them for years to come. Ask how you can get your HCA Membership Pass Nature’s Rewards Card. This card lets you enjoy unlimited membership entry for one full year to the HamiltonConservation Areas.

Nearby Facilities

The Greensville Community Optimist Park, which adjoins Spencer Gorge (Tew’s Falls)/Webster’s Falls, is a beautiful spot that offers nature trails, a historical stone dam and picnic areas. The park was created on the former site of a historic Spencer Creek gristmill by the Greensville Optimist Club in 2003.

Buy your pass online:  
[www.conservationhamilton.ca](http://www.conservationhamilton.ca)  
or by calling 905-525-2181

Your HCA Nature’s Rewards Membership Pass lets you enjoy unlimited membership entry for one full year to the Hamilton Conservation Areas. You and your passengers gain easy entry to our conservation areas, plus unique privileges and a list of valuable membership rewards. Call or visit us to learn more about how you can receive Nature’s Rewards.

*Prices subject to change without notice.*