



Self-Guided Winter Walks

Don't stay inside when lake effect snow hits! Winter is an excellent time to enjoy the outdoors! These trails provide countless opportunities to fight off cabin fever this winter:

Veterans Park

Walk through some of the last remnants of original Ohio swamp forest and along the edge of Granger Pond.

Pete's Pond Preserve

The combination of forest, edge and fresh water has created an oasis for suburban wildlife.

Chagrin River Park

Meander along the river and enjoy scenic views of the water. Keep your eyes open near woodland edges for perching hawks and other raptors.

Lakeshore Reservation

This is an easy trail suitable for all abilities. Check out the beach for icy snow dunes along Lake Erie.

Chapin Forest Reservation

Hike under the lights this winter! A mile of trail lights are on on the Arbor Lane Loop Trail (Hobart Road entrance) each evening from dusk until the park closes, regardless of ski conditions.

Helpful tips for staying warm this winter!

Dress in three layers:

Base layer: Snug and moisture wicking.

Insulating layer: Down coats, etc. This layer should be thinner if doing more strenuous activity.

Waterproofing layer: An outer shell that's waterproof but breathable so you don't get soaked.

Keep your extremities warm by wearing insulated hats and gloves. Wear insulated waterproof boots and thick socks. Cover the opening of your boots with your pants or gaiters to prevent the inside from getting wet.

Avoid cotton as it tends to soak up water and not dry quickly.

Stay hydrated. You may not feel thirsty when it's cold, but it's just as important to stay hydrated this time of year!

Veterans Park

5730 Hopkins Rd.
Mentor, Ohio 44060

- Cardinal Loop Trail

Pete's Pond Preserve

2255 Rockefeller Rd.
Wickliffe, Ohio 44092

- Carriage Lane Trail

Chagrin River Park

East entrance
3100 Reeves Rd.
Willoughby, Ohio 44094

West entrance
1000 Rural Dr.
Eastlake, Ohio 44095

- Riverwood Trail

Lakeshore Reservation

4799 Lockwood Rd.
North Perry Village, Ohio 44081

- All Peoples Trail

Chapin Forest Reservation

10381 Hobart Rd.
Kirtland, Ohio 44094

- Arbor Lane Loop Trail

Park maps and more information can be found at goto.lakemetroparks.com/bingewalk



Eastern hemlock

Eastern hemlocks are common throughout northeast Ohio and are almost always seen near edges of ravines. Hemlocks were first brought here around 11,000 years ago by cones left behind by receding glaciers. Their needles grow singly and are small and flat, and cones are typically less than an inch in length.



Eastern white pine

Eastern white pines are native to northeast Ohio, but not found naturally in other parts of the state. White pines can reach heights of more than 100 feet and are popular for lumber and paper. Needles are three to five inches long, flexible, and grow in tufts of five.



Red pine

Red pines are primarily native to New England and southern Canada, but were planted extensively in Ohio as part of the reforestation effort. Red pines get their name from the red and orange coloration on the bark. Needles are four to six inches long and form in tufts of two.



Austrian pine

Austrian pines are hardy and native to Europe. They were planted extensively in the 18th century due to their full foliage and dark green needles. Needles grow in tufts of two and are about six inches long. Needles can last as long as eight years before dying and falling off. Cones have small prickles on the backsides of the scales.



Eastern redcedar

Eastern redcedars are the most common evergreen in Ohio. Redcedar thrive in alkaline soils and are great trees for erosion control. Members of the juniper family, eastern redcedars have scale-like foliage that can be prickly to the touch, especially on younger trees. Their bark is reddish and shreds off in thin strips.



Colorado blue spruce

Colorado blue spruces are native to the Rocky Mountains but have been planted throughout Ohio as ornamental landscape trees. They grow in well-drained soils and prefer lots of sun. The needles are about an inch long and are stiff and four-sided. Needles grow singly and have a blueish tint to them, giving the tree its name.



Norway spruce

Norway spruces were introduced to the U.S. and are common throughout Ohio. They are prevalent in urban areas as they can tolerate a variety of soils and moisture conditions. Needles are similar to the blue spruce but lack the blueish tinge.

Plants that stay green all year long, even throughout winter, are often referred to as evergreens. Most evergreens are coniferous, meaning they produce cones, but there are broad-leafed evergreens as well! Evergreens bring a bit of color to your winter adventures.



American holly

American holly is most commonly known for Christmas wreaths during the holiday season. Like all broad-leafed evergreens, the holly's leaves are thick and waxy, which helps them survive the cold winter months. The American holly can grow up to 50 feet tall and its famous red berries provide food for animals throughout winter.



Rhododendron

Rhododendrons are broad-leafed evergreen shrubs native to Asia. Rhododendrons are planted in gardens for their beautiful spring flowers. Their oblong leaves are waxy and remain green year round (although there are deciduous varieties).