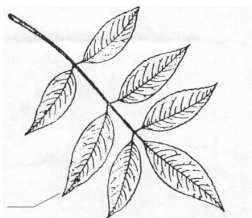


6. Send in the Pioneers

In front of you was once a farm field. Thomas and Ezekiel Jobs may have grown crops or pastured livestock here. Just as the Jobs were pioneers, old growth forest has its pioneers too. Look around the field and you will see them. Most trees here are elm and Red Ash. Can you spot the Red Ash by its corky bark and compound leaves? These species are aggressive colonizers but cannot maintain their dominance over the landscape. As young pioneer trees grow, they make conditions unfavourable for their own kind, which require full sun. Later arrivals fail to grow because of the shade produced by the original "pioneers." In time, new shade-tolerant species such as Sugar Maple arrive. An open field is thus transformed into a "young" forest. If allowed to remain for several hundred years, a young forest such as you see now will transform itself into an old growth forest.



Red Ash



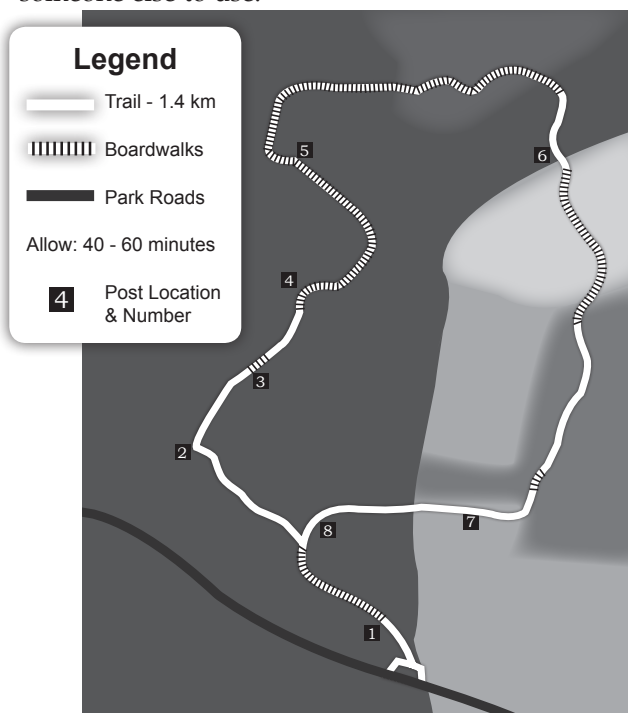
7. Plain Plantations

You are standing in an artificial forest called a pine plantation. The trees here were originally planted in neat rows. Plantations are common at Presqu'île. This one was planted by the park to reforest old farmland. The trouble with plantations is they have little variety. The trees are the same species and the same age

and pine plantations have little understory. Their simple nature allows for little diversity. If the park were one giant plantation there would be far fewer creatures living here. Consider the Pileated Woodpecker. Without large, mature, partly rotten trees to feed and nest in, the species would have to live elsewhere. Now the planted conifers are dying and the deciduous seedlings that are growing will eventually take over. Just as the old farm fields seen earlier are being reclaimed, so too is this artificial forest.

8. There's More Than Meets the Eye

As we have seen, an old growth forest is more than just big trees. We've met many creatures that require the special conditions of this habitat to survive and there are many more we haven't seen. From nesting hawks above to fungal growth beneath our feet, there is more here to discover. Thank you for taking this guide on your walk today. If you don't want to keep it, please return it to the dispenser at the trailhead for someone else to use.



Jobs' Woods Trail is an easy 1.4 km walk through a combination of old growth forest, regenerating farm fields and old plantations. The numbers and information in this guide correspond with numbered posts along the trail.

For more information about Presqu'île or its programs, contact:

Presqu'île Provincial Park
328 Presqu'île Parkway
Brighton, Ontario, KOK 1H0

Telephone: (613) 475-4324
Facsimile: (613) 475-2209

www.ontarioparks.com
www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca



Presqu'île's
interpretive programs
are supported by:



Presqu'île



An Interpretive Guide to the Jobs' Woods Trail

Jobs' Woods Trail

Soon you will be walking on land settled by Thomas and Ezekiel Jobs in 1835. The Jobs family cleared and farmed some of the land but also left portions largely untouched. For the next kilometre, Jobs' Woods Trail passes through ancient upland forests, swamp forests and old farm fields in the process of converting themselves back into forests. Numbered posts along the way correspond with this guide. Each stop will help you understand some of the unique features of an old growth forest.

1. Mighty Monarch of the East

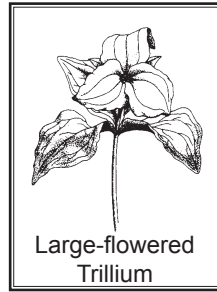
You are standing at the base of a Sugar Maple, a tree that dominates the eastern North American forest ecosystem. The canopy of Sugar Maple leaves above you produces very shady conditions on the forest floor. Most tree seedlings die quickly after only a short time in the shade.



Sugar Maple

Sugar Maples, however, are amongst the most shade tolerant of trees, able to persist for 150 years as seedlings. When a large tree falls, a young tree in the newly available patch of light will grow rapidly to take its place in the canopy. Once mature, a maple can produce thousands of seeds each year for 200 years or more! These seeds contain large amounts of stored energy, giving young maples a month or two of growing time over other tree seedlings competing for resources on the forest floor. These and other traits have helped the Sugar Maple assume the role of the "Monarch" of the eastern woodlands.

2. Big Trees = Old Growth?



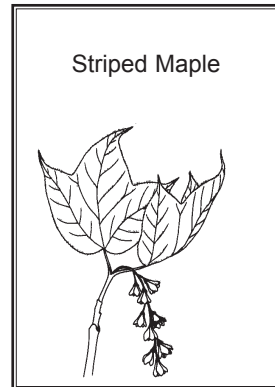
Large-flowered
Trillium

In some people's minds the equation "big trees = old growth" rings true. While there's no doubt that they are an essential component of an old growth forest, big trees are just part of the picture. A mature forest will also feature "stratification" or layering. At this location there are four distinct layers: a wildflower

and fern layer at your feet; shrubs and young trees at eye-level; the "understorey" of immature trees and small tree species; and, far above your head, the canopy. Keep walking down the trail and look carefully because there are additional features of an old growth forest besides big trees and stratification to be seen - try to discover what they are!

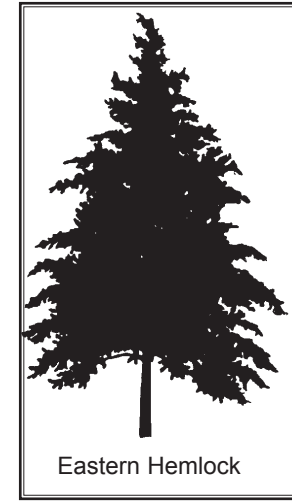
3. Something Lost, Something Gained

We humans often tend to associate beauty with youth and the loss of beauty with old age. Sometimes we apply this view to the natural world. From this location you can see trees that have died and left behind branch-less, rotting trunks called "snags." As well, you can see trees that have blown over, tearing-up gaping holes in the forest floor. As the downed trees rot, they produce lumpy mounds of soil. This is known as "pit and mound" topography. Some people feel that cleaning this up would produce a more aesthetically pleasing forest. Snags, rotting wood and pit and mound topography however are essential aspects of old growth - but what are they good for? At the next several stops you'll see that there is a rich and interesting community of plants and animals that thrive best in a "messy" forest.



Striped Maple

4. Tree Nurseries



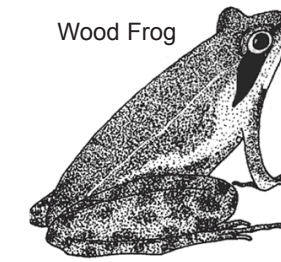
Eastern Hemlock

Before you are three big trees, two Eastern Hemlock, and a Yellow Birch. These are the two tree species that can take advantage of a unique nursery in the old growth forest. While most tree species need their seeds to reach mineral soils before they grow, these two have evolved to take advantage of the many mounds formed by rotting logs and

stumps. The seeds germinate on the logs and then send roots down to the soil. After a while the nursery log rots away and trees left look like they are on stilts. Keep an eye out for nursery logs covered by hemlock and birch seedlings and stilt trees on the trail ahead.

5. Vernal Pools

The pits in an old growth forest may be the most productive microhabitat in our forest. They fill up in spring with water and become breeding pools and hatcheries for a myriad of creatures. Spotted salamanders, newts and three frog species regularly breed here. Male Western Spring Peepers, Chorus Frogs and Wood Frogs come to



Wood Frog

these pools in April to sing. The best singers will breed with the females and the new generation of tadpoles will grow up in these vernal pools. But they will have to hurry! Vernal pools dry up as summer approaches

and the tadpoles must have developed into adult frogs by then or perish. Peer into the many pools ahead for tadpoles and other signs of life.