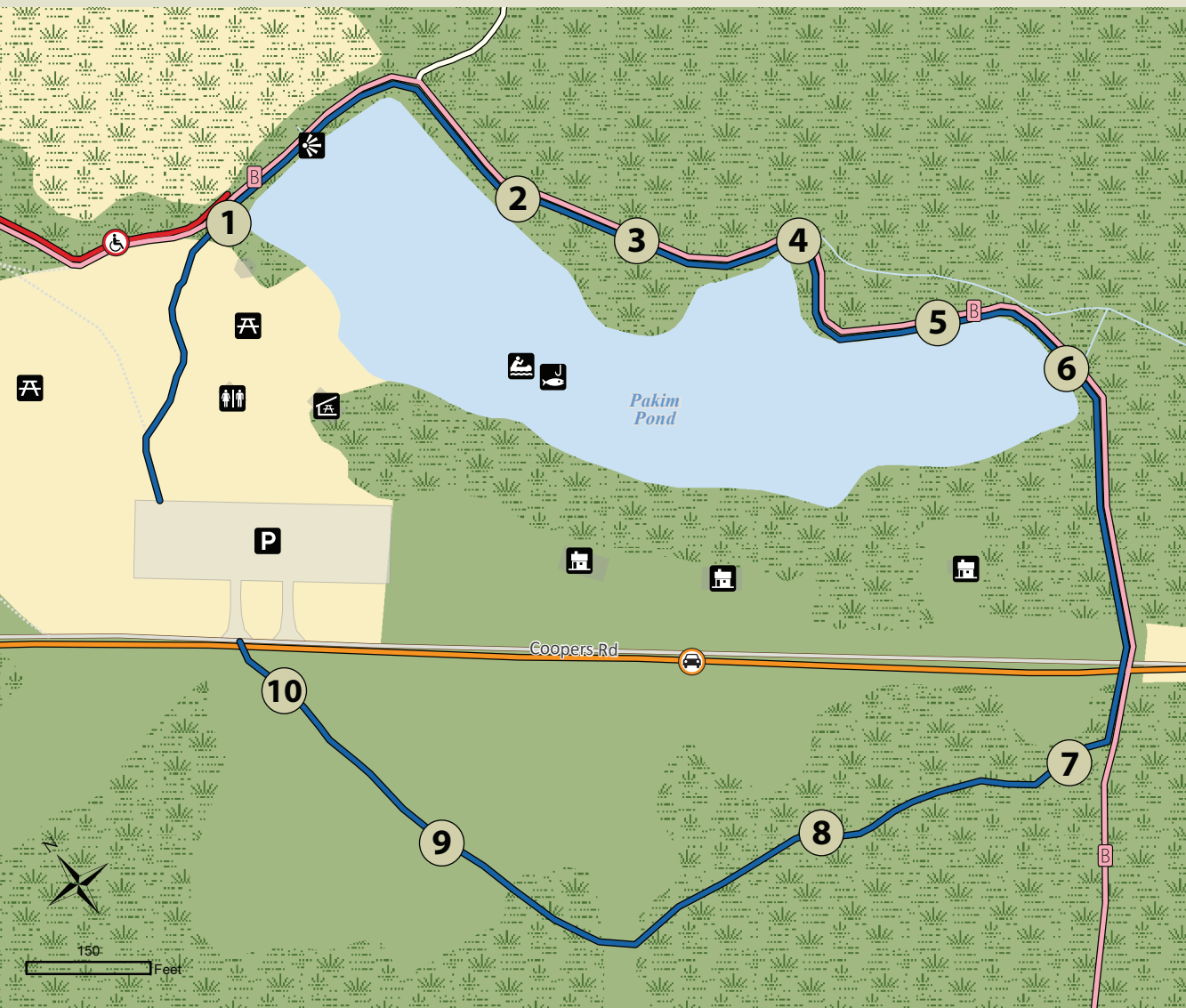


Pakim Pond Nature Trail takes you through a variety of pine barrens ecosystems within Brendan T. Byrne State Forest.

There are 10 points of interest marked with blue numbered posts.

The trail starts at the small pavilion and leads back around to the entrance of the parking lot.

The trail is 0.65 miles long and will take about 40 minutes to complete.



Post 1

A Brief History

Until the early 1900s, this area was a working cranberry bog. Pakim Pond was used as a reservoir to flood and drain the bog located to the left of post 1. The word Pakim is derived from the Lenni Lenape word meaning “cranberry”. In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps developed this spot into a picnic area, building the pavilions and the three cabins along the pond. The area has become a great spot for observing native plants and wildlife. The American cranberry, which got its name from their crane-shaped flowers, can still be found growing along the edges of the old bogs. The New Jersey Pine Barrens is one of the few places cranberries grow naturally.

Post 2

A Sunny Spot

In early spring, flowers begin to bloom and attract native pollinators. By late July, you can smell the fragrance of sweet pepperbush’s white flowers. Crushing the leaves in water can produce a soapy lather which is why it’s also known as “soapbush”. Other flowers in the area include goldenrod, boneset, rose pogonia, leatherleaf, asters and more! Keep a close eye along the edges of the pond where you may see native reptiles and amphibians basking in the sun. One of the most common pond dwelling turtles found here is the eastern painted turtle who spends its time in the warmer months swimming and eating aquatic insects.

American cranberry
(*Vaccinium macrocarpon*)



Post 3

A Common Helper

The area around here is filled with lichen, a “dual” plant formed from the symbiotic relationship between a fungi and an algae. The algae provides the fungi with food and the fungi provides the water and minerals. Lichen is commonly found growing on trees, rocks, dead wood and even on the ground. Many organisms use lichen for a variety of purposes including food, shelter and camouflage. The ruby-throated hummingbird decorates the outside of its nest with lichen. This allows the nest to blend into the trees and stay hidden from predators.

Post 4

A Cedar Swamp

As you approach post 4 you may notice a slight temperature drop. This area is known as a cedar swamp where the trees are dominantly Atlantic white cedars. These trees have shallow root systems which allow them to thrive in these low, wet areas. Bluebirds, cedar waxwings and other songbirds rely on this evergreen, coniferous tree as they eat the cones that mature in September. White-tailed deer also find the young cedars to be a hardy snack. Another characteristic of this area is the large patches of sphagnum moss that cover the forest floor. Due to its absorbent abilities, this moss was historically used for wound dressing and diapers.



Cedar waxwing

Eastern tiger swallowtail butterfly
(*Papilio glaucus*) on sweet pepperbush
(*Clethra alnifolia*)



Thread-leaved sundew
(*Drosera filiformis*)



PAKIM POND NATURE TRAIL

Post 5

An Insect's Unexpected Foe

Pakim Pond is home to three types of insect-eating plants including sundews, bladderworts and pitcher plants. Carnivorous plants are commonly found growing in swampy wetlands along the edges of bogs or ponds. They eat insects to supplement nitrogen or other nutrients not present in the soil. Look around the area for pitcher plants. Pitcher plants have water-filled pitcher-shaped leaves where the outer ring releases an odor to attract insects. The downward facing hairs inside the pitcher drown the insect by preventing them from crawling back out. While this sounds like a trap impossible to escape, the pitcher plant only catches about one percent of the bugs that crawl into its leaves.



Pitcher plant

Post 6

Very Busy Beavers

Did you know that a beaver can cut down 200 trees in just one year! Located here is a beaver dam built by some very busy beavers. A dam stops the flow of water, increasing its depth providing a safe place for the beavers to build their lodge and forage for food. Beavers eat ferns, spadderocks, buds, twigs and more. Lodges are built of twigs, logs, rocks and mud with an underwater entrance. If you are visiting Pakim Pond early in the morning, you might just hear a loud "THWAP" that the beaver makes when alarmed. This sound alerts the surrounding beavers to head to deep water for safety.

Post 7

Evergreen Corner

Located here is eastern teaberry, a low growing evergreen shrub. Its berries persist throughout winter providing food for squirrels, skunks, songbirds and more. The leaves have a waxy coating that helps the plant retain water throughout the year. The leaves and red berries, which ripen in the fall, have a strong minty scent. You may recognize this scent as this plant was once used to flavor wintergreen chewing gum and candy.

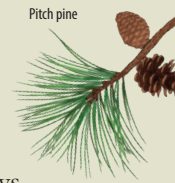
Post 8

Forest Foragers

One of the most common mammals seen in the pine barrens is white-tailed deer. They are often seen grazing the forest floor munching on the tips of shrubs, greenbrier and saplings. Deer typically graze in the early morning and evening, spending the middle of the day and night resting and digesting their food. Another common critter you may hear rustling around is the American red squirrel. This territorial mammal is often found running around collecting food to store for the winter. In the colder months, the red squirrel will have a designated feeding spot. Here it will feast on the stored food creating a large pile of leftovers on the ground. The red squirrel is also known to pick mushrooms and hang them in trees until they are dry and ready to be eaten or stored.

Post 9

Fire and the Pitch Pine



Pitch pine

This section of the trail is dominated by pitch pine, the most common tree of pine barrens habitats in New Jersey. It grows well in dry, sandy soils and has many features that help it survive wildfires. Fire-resistant thick, scaly bark protects buds that sprout after fire and grow into new branches on burned trunks and stumps. Most cones on pitch pines in this area are serotinous. These cones are held closed by a glue-like resin that melts in the heat of a wildfire allowing the cones to open and release seeds. Wildfires play an essential role in pine barrens habitats. They not only burn out the understory and leave behind fertile soils, but they also open the forest canopy allowing light to reach to forest floor to help new plants grow.

Post 10

Spring Shrubs (*Indigenous Plants*)

The end of the trail has a variety of shrubs including huckleberry, mountain laurel, sheep laurel and blueberry. Mountain laurel is a broadleaved evergreen shrub with whitish pink flowers blooming in May. Its flowers have an efficient method of spreading pollen. When a pollinator like a bee lands on the flower, the stamen springs up covering the bee in pollen. Another shrub found nearby is the highbush blueberry, with beautiful white bell-shaped flowers blooming in spring. The dark blue berries of summer are sweet and popular as fresh fruit treats. In the wild, small mammals and birds feast on this delicious fruit.

Please stay on the trail, take only pictures, be aware of changing trail conditions and report any trail issues to the park.



BRENDAN T. BYRNE STATE FOREST
Highway Route 72 East
New Lisbon, NJ 08064
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State of New Jersey
Department of
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BRENDAN T. BYRNE STATE FOREST

PAKIM POND NATURE TRAIL



INTERPRETIVE TRAIL GUIDE

Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) and sphagnum moss

