

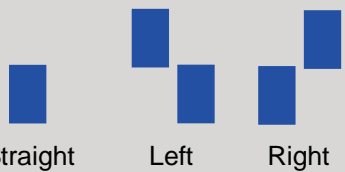
Wells Mills County Park Trail Map



Scale (miles)



Trail Blazes



Straight Left Right

Brookville Road

Penns Hill
X 126'

Laurel Hill
X 130'

Racon Branch

Oyster Creek

Ridge Road

Wells Mills Road (Route 532)

Wells Mills Lake

Cold Brook

Oyster Creek

Stage Branch

Morey Road

Morey Road

Wells Mills Road

Joseph A. Citta Scout Reservation

Joseph A. Citta Scout Reservation

Legend

0.7 mi.		Shrub ID Trail (Pink Blazes)		Conrad-Oakley Cabin and Boat Launching and Parking Area
3.2 mi.		All Terrain Bike Trail (Yellow Blazes)		Nature Center
8.4 mi.		Macri Trail (White Blazes)		Picnic Area and Playground
3.5 mi.		Estlow Trail (Green Blazes)		Trailhead and Restrooms
1.3 mi.		Conrad Trail/Self-Guided Nature Trail (Blue Blazes)		Maintenance Building
0.3 mi.		Visually Impaired Person Trail (VIP Trail)		Bridge
0.1 mi.		Nature Observation Blind (Yellow Blazes/Black Dot)		Nature Observation Blind
0.3 mi.		Tree ID Trail (Red Blazes)		
		Dirt Road		
		Park Boundary		
		Paved Road		
		Stream		

Hiking Trail Rules

1. Please sign in at the trailhead near the outdoor restrooms. This is for your own safety.
2. Please stay on the trail – Hiking off the trails is not permitted.
3. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the trails.
4. Smoking and fires are not permitted on the trails.
5. Dogs **MUST** be on a leash at all times.
6. Please pick up your own trash and a little extra, if you can!
7. Do not feed or approach wildlife – enjoy it from a distance.
8. Ticks may be present, even in cold weather. We recommend that hikers wear light-colored clothing, tuck both pant legs into their boots or socks, apply an insect repellent containing DEET, and check for ticks after hiking.
9. Please do not pick or remove any vegetation from the park.
10. Part of the Penns Hill Trail runs through the Joseph A. Citta Scout Reservation. Please respect this property by observing all trail rules.
11. If you do not wish to keep this brochure, please recycle it inside the Nature Center
12. All-terrain Bikes **MUST** stay on the designated bike trail, and **MUST** give hikers the right-of-way.
13. Cross country skiers are welcome when the ground is snow-covered. All trail rules apply.
14. Off-road vehicles (ORVs) are not permitted in the park or on the trails.
15. **Please sign out at the trailhead before leaving the park.**

Treasure in the Pine Barrens

Wells Mills County Park boasts a variety of unique habitats including a freshwater lake, streams, bogs, Atlantic White Cedar and Maple-Gum swamps, and Pine-Oak uplands. Many unique and rare plant species also grow here: majestic cedars tower over Curly Grass Ferns, pitcher plants, sundews, Cranberries, sphagnum moss, and Turkey Beard.

The habitat diversity within the park's boundary provides food and shelter for a variety of animals that are an integral part of the Pine Barrens ecosystem; and the park provides many opportunities to observe and enjoy these habitats firsthand.

Park Highlights

Wells Mills Nature Center
Over 16 miles of marked trails
Boating and fishing access
Picnic area
Playground
Canoe rentals
1,400 square foot exhibit room
50 seat lecture room

The Wells Mills Nature Center

The Wells Mills Nature Center was designed to meet the ever-growing need for environmental education and recreation in Ocean County. Exhibits inside the Nature Center interpret the local history, flora, and fauna of Ocean County. The Elizabeth Meirs Morgan observation deck provides a fine view of Wells Mills Lake and the surrounding Pine Barrens from atop the building.

The Nature Center serves as the starting point for many environmental and recreation programs that offered by the staff throughout the year.

The Nature Center also boasts a 50-seat lecture room for educational programs.

Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders

John C. Bartlett, Jr.
Chairman of Parks and Recreation
John P. Kelly
James F. Lacey
Gerry P. Little
Joseph H. Vicari



Ocean County Department of Parks and Recreation

Michael T. Mangum, *Director*
Michael J. Fiure, *Assistant to the Director*
Mary Bavais Mehorter, *Superintendent of Recreation*
German Georgeiff, *Chief Park Naturalist*

Mailing Address

Wells Mills County Park
905 Wells Mills Road
Waretown, NJ 08758
609-971-3085

Directions

From the North and South:

Take the Garden State Parkway to Exit 69
Turn left onto Wells Mills Road (County Road 532)
The park is 2.2 miles ahead on your left

From the West:

Take Route 72 East
Turn left onto Wells Mills Road (County Road 532)
The park is 3.5 miles ahead on your right

Public Use

Wells Mills County Park is open to the public from 8 a.m. to sunset every day. We encourage public activities that do not impact the "conservation-natural area" designation of the park. The Wells Mills Nature Center is open from 10-4 every day. We invite visitors to stop and see the exhibits at the Nature Center prior to their use of the Park grounds.

Group Use

All groups MUST register in advance of their visit to Wells Mills County Park

We advise group leaders wishing to schedule a visit or education program at the park to reserve the date at least nine months in advance in order to prevent disappointment.

Groups must make reservations to use the picnic area, which can accommodate up to one hundred people. Reservations are handled by mail or in person at any Ocean County Department of Parks and Recreation office. Please call (609) 971-3085 for additional information.

Canoeing & Fishing

Wells Mills Lake is one of the most scenic Pine Barrens lakes. You may bring your own boat (no gas motors) and launch at the Conrad-Oakley Cabin, or rent a canoe at the Nature Center when in season. All boaters **MUST WEAR LIFE JACKETS AT ALL TIMES**, and fishermen are required to possess a valid fishing license.

Tick Alert

Due to the high incidence of Lyme Disease in our area, we ask visitors to take precautions while visiting the Park. Wear light-colored clothing and tuck your pant legs into your boots or socks. Use insect repellent containing DEET on all clothes, and check yourself thoroughly after returning from the trails. For more information, please see a member of the naturalist staff.

Wells Mills County Park



Welcome to Wells Mills County Park! The park is dedicated to promoting environmental awareness through conservation and education, while providing a peaceful Pine Barrens setting where everyone can enjoy Ocean County's natural heritage. Protected within the boundaries of the 900-plus-acre park are picturesque wetlands and uplands untouched by human development.

With sixteen miles of marked hiking trails, the park is designed to be a passive-recreation facility. All visitors must park their vehicles in our parking lot, and are asked to sign in and out at the trailhead when hiking the trails. Visitors are also encouraged to visit the Nature Center to view the exhibits, obtain a calendar of events, or obtain additional information about the park.

Wells Mills County Park History

The history of the park dates back to colonial times when Elishia Lawrence, a zealous Tory, lost ownership of this land after fighting on the side of the British during the Revolutionary War.

James Wells is credited with damming Oyster Creek and building the first sawmill on the property in the late 1700s. Large stands of Atlantic White Cedar were harvested for lumber. This wood was prized for use in shipbuilding, home construction and fences for its light weight and rot resistance.

The Estlow family acquired Wells Mills during the late 1800s. They were responsible for building two sawmills next to one another, thus the plural nature of the park's name. Other activities that occurred on the property include shingle making, firewood cutting and sphagnum moss gathering. Clay mining was also undertaken by Tilden Estlow, who was one of the last Estlows to live at Wells Mills.

In 1936 the land was sold as a recreational retreat to the Conrad family who were prominent local businessmen. Charles M. and Grove Conrad, Jr. built the rustic cabin that overlooks Wells Mills Lake during the winter of 1937. The Conrads gave life rights to the Estlows, who remained on the property to live and work. Tilden Estlow died in 1951, after which his wife Lydia moved to Waretown.

Due to increasing taxes, the land was sold to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation in the late 1970's. This precluded any development plans for the tract. The Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders purchased approximately 200 acres from the Foundation in 1985. Additional land was acquired from Ocean Township and other private landowners, increasing the park's size to over 900 acres.