

# Cressman Woods Trail

## (Homer Watson Park)

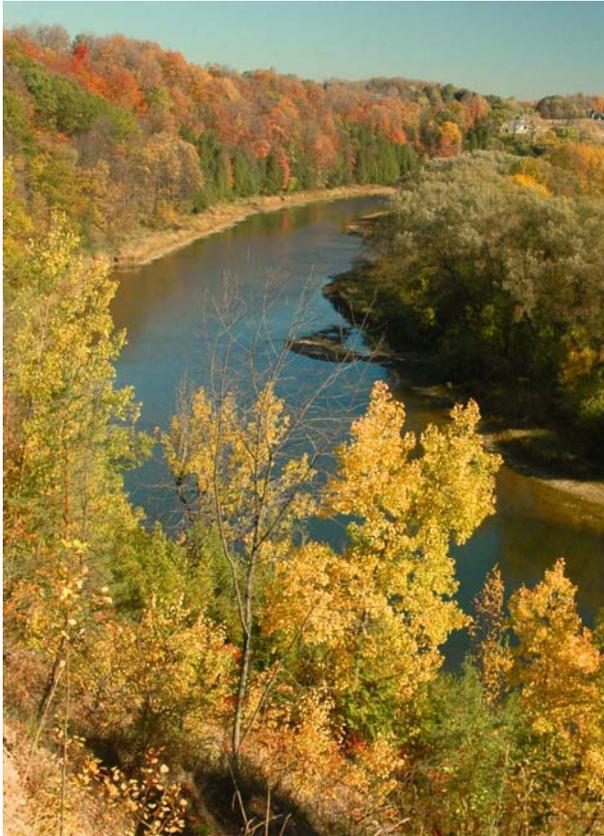


Photo Credit: Leslie Bamford



Cressman's Woods Trail is located in Homer Watson Park. It is Kitchener's second largest natural area (85 hectares). The size and diversity of this place makes it a natural heritage gem. It also has an interesting cultural history.

On the eastern edge of the park, beside Wilson Ave there are steep bluffs overlooking the Grand River. This location provides a great view of the river and surrounding landscape. At the western edge, past the old railway right of way Schneider Creek meanders through a floodplain forest. Between these two waterways is one of the best examples of old growth forest and trees in the City. Some of the trees in this area are more than 200 years old!

Homer Watson Park is located just north of the Carolina Zone. Running roughly south of Highway 401 and into the northern United States the Carolina Zone has plant and wildlife species that are unique to that zone, but not typically found further north. One example is White oak. South of Highway 401 this tree is very common, while in the southern parts of Kitchener (e.g. Homer Watson Park) they are very scarce, and if you go a few kilometers north of the park you will not find a single white oak in our woodlands. It is amazing how things can change over a few kilometers.

Photo Credit: Stephen May



Red Oak



White Oak



Photo Credit: Ken Burrell

Red-bellied Woodpecker

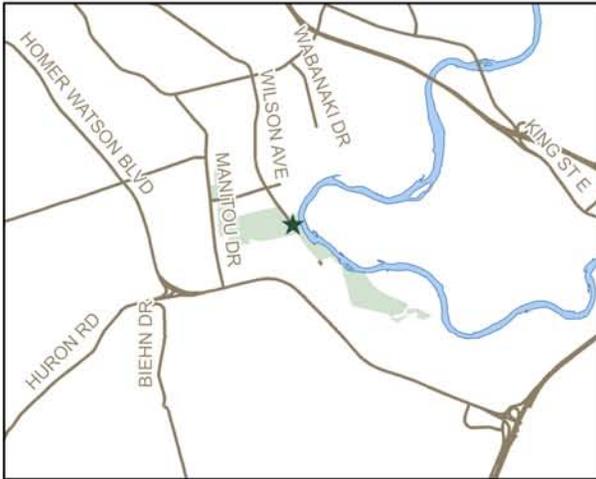
The Red-bellied woodpecker is another Carolina species you may see in the park. In recent years this bird has become more common in the park.

The park also has a cultural history story. In the early 1900's Cressman Woods was to be sold. Kitchener's early conservationists concerned that the woods would be lost took action and purchased the property through the Waterloo County Grand River Park Ltd. In 1943 the group decided to transfer the park to the City. Since that time the park has been expanded a number of times. There is also talk that Oscar Wilde an associate of Homer Watson visited Cressman's Woods. And, then there is the local folklore about the 'Lovers Spring' in Cressman Woods.

When visiting this place please make sure that children are supervised when near the waterways. While the steep bluffs overlooking the Grand River are a tempting place to explore it is a sensitive habitat and an important breeding habitat for swallows, a species currently in decline.

For more information on the birds that can be found at Homer Watson download the Homer Watson Bird List from KNAP's website.

## DIRECTIONAL MAP



Enter on Wilson Ave (not a thru street) from the north end just past Wabanaki Drive.

## BE A GOOD STEWARD

Enjoy your visit – please do your part by only taking memories, and staying on open trails.

**Thanks for your help**

## Kitchener's Natural Areas Program (KNAP)

The goal of KNAP is to engage the community in environmental stewardship, educate people about Kitchener's natural areas and create opportunities to experience nature in the City.

Collaborative Members

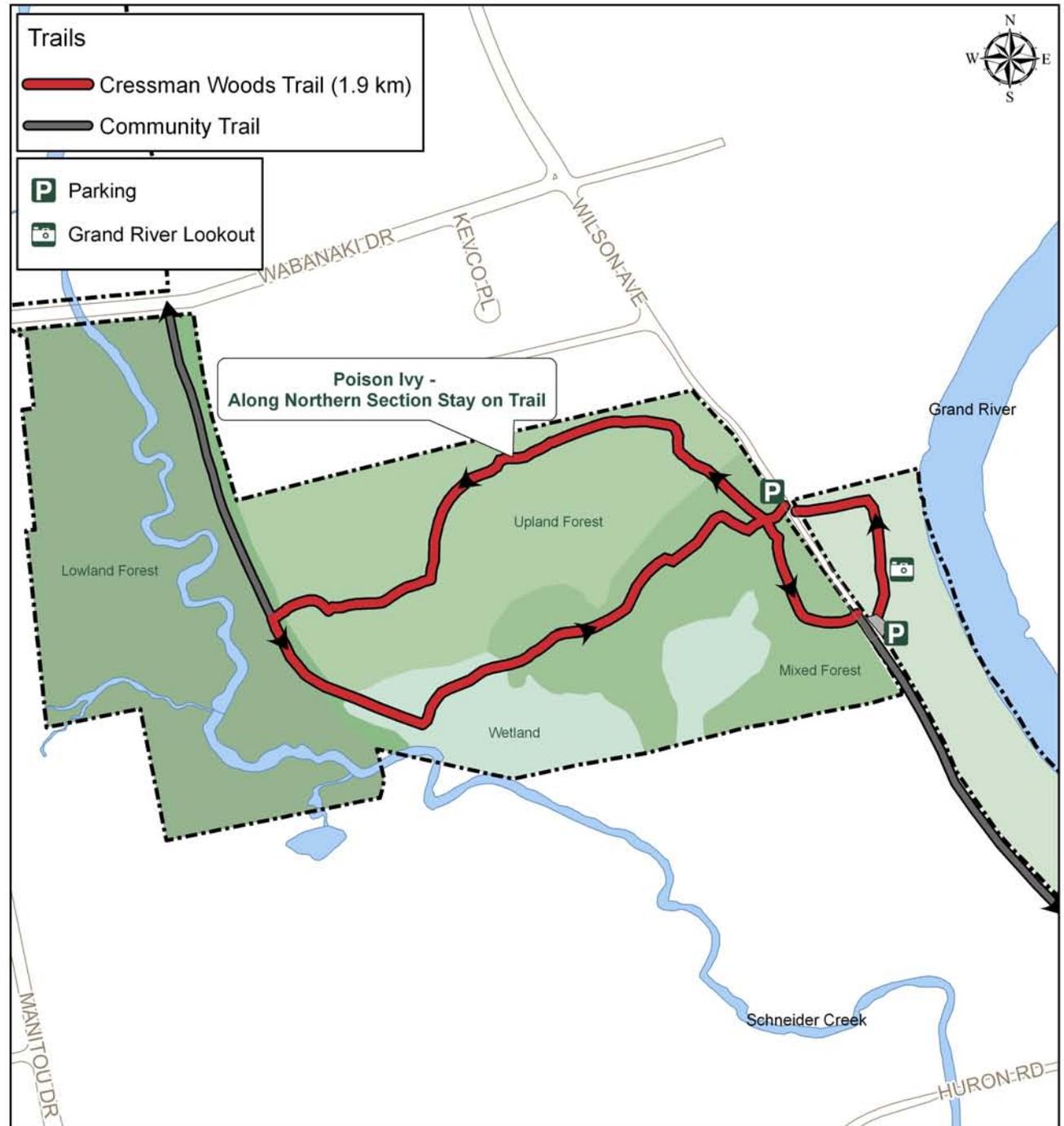


### For More Information:

Email: [knap@kitchener.ca](mailto:knap@kitchener.ca)  
 Website: [www.kitchener.ca/knap](http://www.kitchener.ca/knap)  
 Phone: 519-741-3400 x3349

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## CRESSMAN WOODS



KITCHENER'S NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM (KNAP)