

Deer Park Pond Loop

Overview

This loop hike follows the shore of scenic Deer Park Pond.

Details Time: 2 hours Difficulty:

Driving Directions

Take I-80 West to Exit 19 (Hackettstown/Allamuchy/Andover). Turn left at the bottom of the ramp and continue south on County Route 517 for 2.1 miles to Deer Park Road (there is a brick house on the left at this intersection). Turn left onto Deer Park Road and follow it for 0.7 mile to a circle at the end of the paved road. Continue for one mile beyond the circle on a dirt road (not maintained in winter) to a locked gate, and park in the grassy field on the right, just before the gate.

Description

A map may be available at the kiosk in the parking area. The Jersey Off Road Bike Association has detailed maps on [their website](#) ^[8].

This hike traverses the Allamuchy Natural Area of Allamuchy State Park, following old woods roads with gentle grades. The area was once part of a private game preserve on which deer were introduced (hence the name Deer Park). The trails used by this hike are open to mountain bikes and are maintained by the Jersey Off Road Bike Association. Some of the trails may be very wet after heavy rains.

Proceed ahead on the road, closed to vehicular traffic and marked with blue blazes. In about half a mile, you'll notice the start of the white-blazed Deer Path Trail on your right. This will be your return route, but for now, continue ahead on the road, following the blue blazes.

In another few hundred feet, you'll go through an open yellow gate and reach a sign for the blue-blazed Lake View Trail. Just beyond, when the blue-blazed road curves to the right, you should continue straight ahead on an unmarked trail (you may notice some faded white paint blazes). In a short distance, you'll reach a fork. Bear right, now following the white-blazed Deer Path Trail, which begins a steady climb.

In about a third of a mile, you'll notice a sign for the Barberry Trail on your right. Turn right onto this red-blazed trail, which descends steadily towards Deer Park Pond. The trail closely follows the northwestern shore of this scenic pond, with several side trails leading down to the shoreline. You will notice extensive beaver activity in the area, with several beaver lodges near the shore of the pond.

After curving to the right and crossing the inlet of the pond, the Barberry Trail ends at a junction with the blue-blazed Lake View Trail, which comes in from the left. Continue straight ahead, now following the blue blazes. To the right, between the trail and the pond, you'll pass a thick stand of evergreen trees.

In a third of a mile, you'll reach a fork, where the white-blazed Deer Path Trail joins from the left. Bear right, now following both white and blue blazes (although no blazes are evident at this point). The trail approaches the lakeshore and crosses the outlet of the lake on a dam, with panoramic views over the lake.

After crossing the dam, the blue-blazed trail curves to the right, but you should continue ahead, following the white-blazed Deer Path Trail, which climbs through the woods. Just before reaching the crest of the rise, a side trail leads left to a high point (with limited views), but you should bear right to continue on the white-blazed trail.

Soon the trail begins a steady descent. At the base of the descent, it comes to a T-intersection, where you turn right onto another woods road, continuing to follow the white blazes. The trail crosses a stone bridge over a stream and passes an old mine opening on the left. Soon, it begins to parallel an old stone wall, climbing gently.

After curving sharply to the left, the white-blazed Deer Path Trail ends at a junction with the blue-blazed dirt road on which you started the hike. Turn left and follow the road back to the locked gate where the hike began.