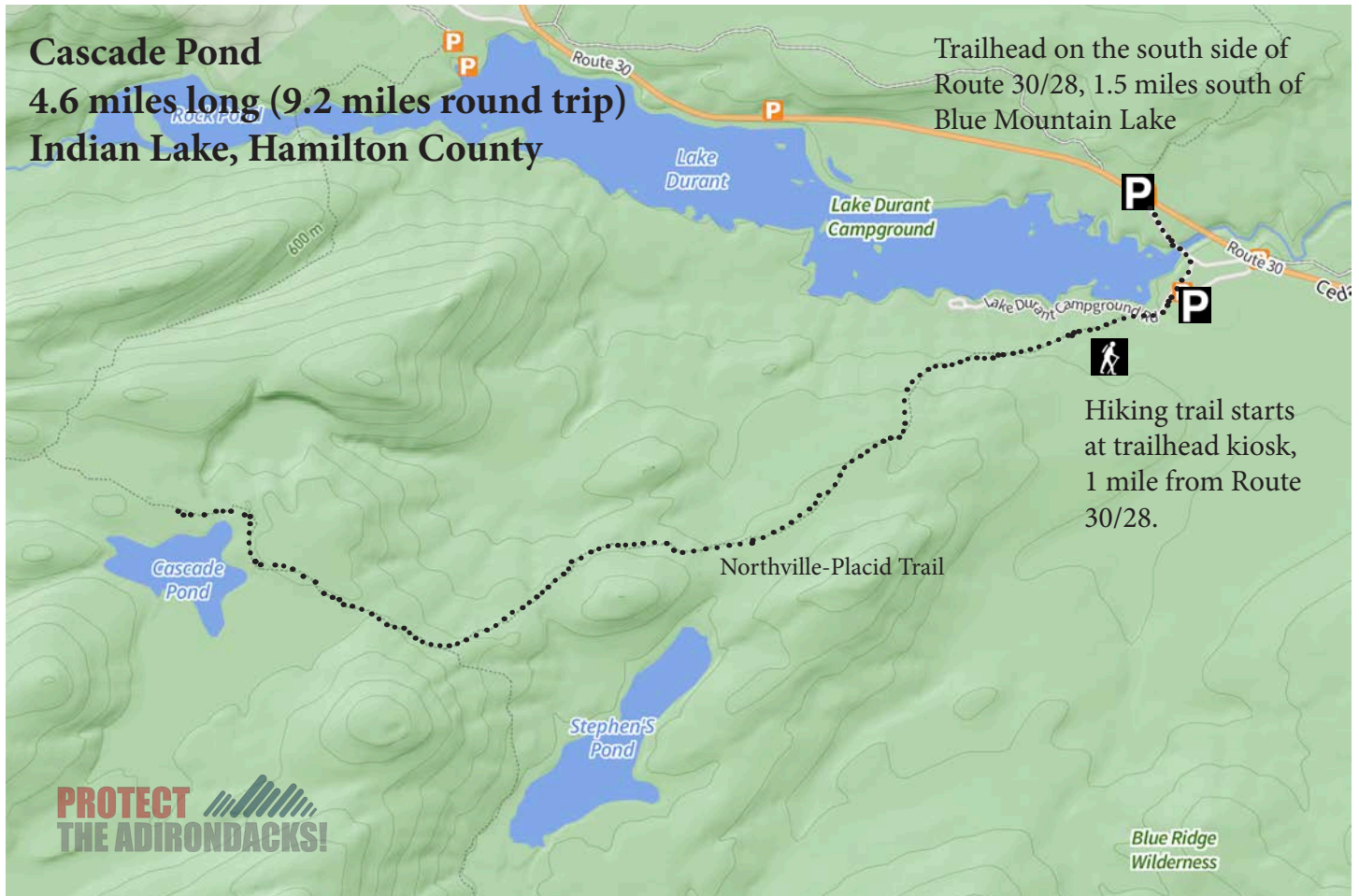


Cascade Pond



Cascade Pond is a remote lake with a leanto that is on the east side of the Blue Ridge Wilderness Area. The trail is gentle, with a few uphill sections, that traverses over 2.5 miles of the Northville-Lake Placid Trail (NPT). This trail is entirely on public Forest Preserve lands and winds through an attractive mature northern hardwood forest. The pond provides great views of Blue Ridge and has a few rocky outcrops along the shoreline. The hike is 3.3 miles to the pond and leanto, and is 6.6-miles round trip. The entire hike is on public Forest Preserve.

The trail to Cascade Pond cuts through the Lake Durant Campground, which is part of New York's campground system and requires reservation for camping at a designated site. The trail to Cascade Pond can be accessed on



the west side of Route 28/30 just two miles south of Blue Mountain Lake. The trailhead sign says, “Northville Placid Trail.” The trail leads through an open meadow and then through a wooded stretch behind the Forest Ranger’s log cabin. In a few hundred yards, the trail passes around a vehicle barrier gate on a cement bridge above the Lake Durant dam. The Rock River flows out of the dam.

After crossing the dam, follow an asphalt road and bear right and follow paved roads and “NPT Trail” signs and trail markers through the interior of the Lake Durant Campground for about .25 miles. Pass the shower building, pass around another gate, follow a paved road across a bridge, and soon thereafter there are signs on the left for the NPT and follow the foot trail over a narrow dirt road.

Follow this dirt road for approximately .5 miles. The trail passes around another motor vehicle gate before reaching the trailhead register kiosk. A sign reads Stephens Pond 3.1 miles. The forest that surrounds the beginning of the hike to Cascade Pond is a diverse Adirondack mix of evergreens, including some massive white pines, with thick stands of hemlocks and hardwoods, and sporadic hickory and black cherry joining both striped and sugar maples, yellow and paper birches, and the ever-present beech.

For the next 2.6 miles, the trail is generally level, well-worn and well-marked, with two sustained, gradual climbs. Trail conditions are often wet and eroded. Here and there are particularly massive yellow birch and black cherry. Glacial erratics stand along the trail side. 2.6 miles from the trailhead register the trail reaches a junction. Stephen’s Pond is .6 miles to the south and Cascade Pond is 1 mile to the north. There is one leanto on each pond, which are easy to miss and walk past.

The trail north 1 mile from the trail junction to Cascade Pond curves around the base of a ridge, and passes through a small wetland. The forest type changes from an open hardwood forest to a mixed forest with large white pine, hemlock and cedar trees as the trail approaches the pond. The pit privy is closer to the trail than the leanto. A side trail leads to the leanto. A handful of large rocks on the shoreline provide spots to view the expanse of the lake and forests of Blue Ridge in the distance.

Help Protect the Forest Preserve and Be Prepared When You Hike: Please follow “carry in, carry out” rules for all trash and follow **Leave No Trace** principles when hiking in the public Forest Preserve and other wild areas. The 7 Leave No Trace principles are: 1) Plan ahead and prepare ; 2) Stay on hiking trails and camp at designated areas; 3) Dispose of human waste and trash properly; 4) Leave what you find; 5) Minimize campfires; 6) Respect wildlife; 7) Respect other hikers. **Educated and prepared hikers do not damage the environment or need search and rescue unless injured.**