



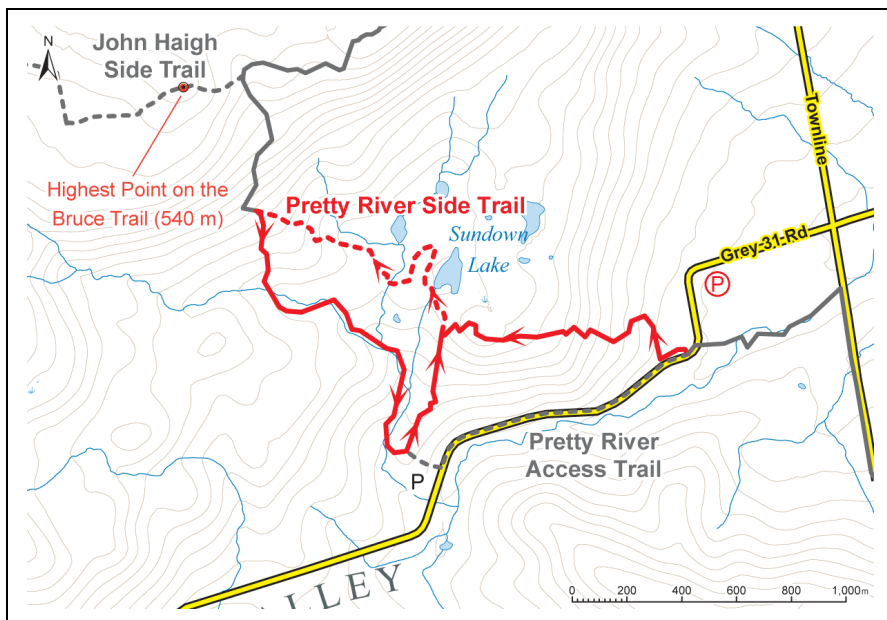
Close to nature.
Close to home.

THE BRUCE TRAIL CONSERVANCY

The Pretty River Side Trail

Hike Length: 5.1 km

Section: Blue Mountains Bruce Trail Club



How to get there and Where to Park: From Simcoe County Road 124 just south of Collingwood, travel west on Simcoe Road 33 which after the Townline becomes Grey 31. Just before a bend in the road there is a large parking lot on the left ("Snodrifters Parking Lot").

Description of Hike: Continue on foot on Grey 31 until you see the white blazes of the main Bruce Trail just beyond the next bend. Turn right and follow the white blazes as they lead steadily uphill for 800 m through abandoned farmland and forest. You are climbing over a moraine – a mound of gravel left behind by the glacier. When you want to take a break from this short but steep climb, turn around and admire the excellent views down the valley to Nottawasaga Bay. After a short descent down the other side of the moraine you will see the sign for the Pretty River Side Trail. Turn right and follow the blue blazes of the side trail through a mixed forest to a hidden gem, Sundown Lake. Here a small dock and a picnic area invite you to take a rest and perhaps a swim.

Sundown Lake is a kettle lake, a product of retreating glaciers. When a glacier's forward movement halted, sand and gravel flowing out of the ice were deposited at the nose of the glacier (forming the moraine). Sometimes blocks of ice broke off and were trapped. As these blocks melted, distinct rounded depressions called kettles formed in the deposits, and often were filled by springwater, creating kettle lakes.

The blue blazed trail then continues north on an old logging road which it leaves several times, crosses a streambed and heads through overgrown fields. You will join the white blazes of the main Trail again; follow them (to the left) on a gradual descent. Several times you will cross a bubbling brook that is flowing down to the Pretty River. The white blazes will lead you around and back to the junction of the Pretty River Side Trail and the main Trail, where you can retrace your steps over the moraine and back to your car. If the thought of climbing the moraine twice in one day is too daunting, you have the option of taking a short side trail just a few hundred metres before the junction with the Pretty River Side Trail. It leads downhill to the valley road (Grey 31), where you can walk carefully along this busy road back to your car.