

Still Walking Close to Home in February

As anticipated in the January article, I'm continuing to focus on walking close to home again this month. I want to feature two more examples of walking opportunities in Scugog Township.

In the far eastern part of the Township is the East Cross Forest Conservation Area; the municipal address of the main access point is 4560 Devitt's Road. The parcel is over 1100 acres, almost all of it forested. There are about 7 kilometres of marked trails; a trail map is available at the website: <https://www.kawarthaconservation.com/en/conservation-areas/durham-east-cross-forest.aspx>

I had not heard of this Conservation Area until about 2014 when I retired, but since then have walked all of their marked trails several times. There are some partially mature forest landscapes in the north, mostly on very sandy soils, and a pine plantation and more mature mixed forest in the south. Surfaces are sometimes sandy, requiring some increased walking effort, and there are small hills. This time of year walkers may encounter cross-country skiers, snowshoers and snowmobiles; in summer, horses are sometimes on the trails.

The TransCanada Trail (aka "The Great Trail") cuts through the northwest part of Scugog, following an old rail line through the Beaver River Wetland.

The trail enters Scugog at Lakeridge Road just east of Uxbridge, and continues up to Blackwater and beyond, passing through about 7 kilometres in Scugog. The whole length is in marshlands in the Beaver River valley. The old rail bed provides a solid and flat walking surface. This is another trail that I had not visited until the pandemic started; I had no idea that there was such an extensive marshland in that part of Scugog. I did not expect to enjoy a flat trail through a marsh, but found it a pleasant experience each time I have visited (spring, summer and winter). However, I tend to find that every walk is a great walk!