

1. **Cracked Shield Lichens - on trees.** Actually a combination of a fungus and an alga, living together in symbiosis, each providing something for the other. The fungus provides water and minerals; the alga has chlorophyll and makes food.
2. **Moss - on the right.** Many types along the trail. Doesn't have a stem. Water and nutrients are passed from cell to cell instead. Therefore, the plant is small and close to the ground. They reproduce with spores.
3. **Pincushion Moss.** Forms mounded clumps. Push on one gently to see how it got its name.
4. **Decaying logs.** Carbon from the wood is being returned to soil and air by decomposers such as insects, fungi, and bacteria. An ecosystem all in itself, mosses, fungi, insects, salamanders, and spiders, among other organisms, live here.
5. **Natural Forest – both sides of the road.** Notice the variety of types of plants and random locations, rather than planted rows. This leads to a healthier forest for plants and animals.
6. **Understory (shrub layer) - along the road.** Grows here due to more light, supporting a greater diversity in plant growth. The understory provides shelter and food for wildlife.
7. **Purple trail markers.** Trail turns right off the road – **light purple paint** on trees marks trail.
8. **Black Oak - on the right at the start of the trail.** Part of the red oak family. Grows 60-80 feet. 5-8" long, shiny green leaves have bristled

lobes. Gray to reddish brown bark with ridges. Acorns oval with shallow, hairy cap, produced every other year.

9. **Path.** Created by firemen during a large forest fire on the face of the cliff at the overlook, caused by lightning, in 1963.
10. **Partridgeberry - on left.** Tiny, creeping plant, round leaves, in pairs, white markings. Tiny, trumpet-shaped flowers, ¼" wide, in May. Soon after, red berries appear in pairs, a good food for birds and small mammals.
11. **Buttressed roots - on right.** Roots extend above the soil from the base of the tree. Could be due to thin layer of soil on top of bedrock, or growing on top of a stump, or nurse log, which has rotted away.
12. **Burl - on left.** Bulge on a white oak tree. It may be a genetic defect, tumor, or reaction to injury, but it is not known for sure. It results in a swirly grain.
13. **Dead beech tree (tag # 53)** Killed by beech bark disease. The tree was first wounded by aphids, which appear as white spots. Then a fungus was able to get into the wounds.
14. **Hemlock/Maple (tag # 54).** It appears that these 2 trees are growing out of the same base, but they are not.
15. **Phototropism (tags #20 and 55) – a plant's response to light.** As these hemlocks grew, the trunks twisted around each other, possibly to reach more light.

16. **Scarred trunk – on right.** This white oak has a huge scar, running the entire length of the trunk. It could have been caused by a lightning strike. As the top of the tree was struck, the lightning was carried to the ground in the moist cambium layer, just under the bark.
17. **Eastern Hemlock.** Grows 60-70 feet, crown tip bent away from prevailing wind. Small cones. Needles flat, 1/3" to 2/3" long, dark green above. 2 white lines on bottom, made up of stomates, cells which let gases pass in and out during photosynthesis and respiration.
18. **Fungi.** Many different types along the trail, if conditions are right. A few possibilities are milk mushroom, bracket fungus, and scrambled egg slime. Observe and compare their different structures without touching.
19. **Mushroom nursery.** When spores land in a moist location, like a decaying log, a network of threads, called a mycelium, grows. It produces swellings, which develop into mushrooms, which are the fruit of the mycelium.
20. **Sclerotium.** Black, threadlike lines on a decaying log. It will produce mushroom-like bodies when the conditions are right.
21. **Brush piles.** Make excellent homes for animals, such as rabbits and skunks.
22. **Eastern Hop-hornbean (Ironwood).** Grows 30-40 feet. Leaves 2 ½" to 4 ½", oval, double-toothed, with tufts of yellow hair on lower midrib. Mature bark has narrow strips curling away from

the trunk. Tough wood used in farm implements. Seeds are good food for turkeys.

23. **Tipped over trees** - may be due to the shallow soil that is on top of bedrock. The roots are not able to penetrate the rock in order to anchor the tree more securely.

24. **Stump feeder**. Small trees growing on top of stumps. The roots feed on the stump as it decays. Eventually the stump will rot away, and the roots may be sitting in the air, up above the ground. The same effect can occur on rotted-away, “nurse logs”.

25. **Ferns**. Many varieties of ferns along the trail. Carefully turn over the frond to locate the spore cases, holding millions of microscopic spores for reproduction.

26. **Trail joins road to Overlook**. Notice there are more plants. What is the reason? Turn left to continue to the Overlook.

27. **Physical Weathering**. The outcropping of bedrock on the left is cracked and chipped due to winter freezing and thawing, as well as from the pressure of the snow.

28. **“Tree City USA” – on the right**. It is easy to see why Bath earned this title.

29. **Peneplain – from the Overlook, to the left**. The hills are the same height. This area, at one time, was a raised, flat plain, called a peneplain. Rivers and glaciers gradually carved out the valleys. One river came from Avoca, to the west, and the other from Hammondsport, to the north.

30. **Moraines – from the Overlook, to the near right**. The hilltops north of Bath are not as even in height because they are moraines, glacial deposits of soil and rock, dumped by a melting glacier roughly 12,000 years ago. A moraine dammed the end of Hammondsport valley, and the melting glacial water filled in the valley, creating Keuka Lake.

31. **Kettle Lake – from the Overlook, to the far right**. Lake Salubria was formed as a kettle lake. A chunk of ice broke off from the main part of the glacier and settled on the ground. Sediments were deposited around it as it melted, leaving a depression in the ground that filled with water. The lake is fed by underground springs.

32. **Renewable Energy – from the Overlook, especially to the left**. Look closely at the hilltops to see some of the windmills nearby.

33. **Raptors**. From the Overlook, watch for bald eagles, osprey, vultures, and red-tailed hawks.



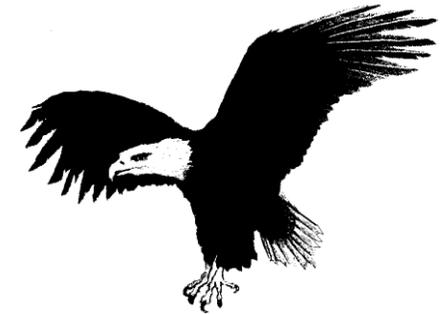
This **concludes** the Overlook Trail/Purple Trail. You may return to the park by way of either roadway.

If you have no further use for this trail guide, please **“be green”** and help our park and planet by either **returning** it to the nature center or **recycling** it.

# Mossy Bank Park

## The Overlook Trail (The Purple Trail)

### A Self-Guided Tour



**Directions:** From the nature center, follow the road to the right. When you approach the large pavilion, bear left, and then follow the roadway to the right, between the 2 pavilions. Start using the trail guide at this point.

