

THREE HIKES NEAR THE OROMOCTO RIVER

Thatch Road Trail, Deer Park Trails, Sunpoke Dike Trail

THATCH ROAD TRAIL

Distance: about 6 km return

This section of abandoned highway along the St. John River makes for a nice walk or bike ride.

Caution: Poison Ivy and Stinging Nettle literally line this trail in many places.

The trail is a natural habitat for mosquitos, so dress accordingly during summer.

Getting There:

From Fredericton, take NB-102 south to the Fredericton Airport.

Drive about 1.3 km past the airport entrance, to Phil's Auto and Recreation, and turn left onto the Thatch Road.

Drive about 450 meters to a boat landing and park in the large parking area.

The Trail:

The boat landing is near the remnants of an old ferry landing. There are still many of these old ferry landings remaining to mark the spots where people once crossed the river before the building of the Burton Bridge.

(Scouring Rushes)

Just up past the boat landing is a covered picnic table.

Beside the picnic table there is a hill where an unusual plant called Scouring Rush grows in profusion. This large member of the horsetail family resembles small bamboo, and has a gritty surface that was once used for cleaning pots and pans, etc. They are uncommon and worth a look.

The old paved road is quite straight, and sometimes becomes a tunnel through Butternut and Silver Maple trees. We also saw Basswood, Cherry and Birch Trees, and Grapes among others.

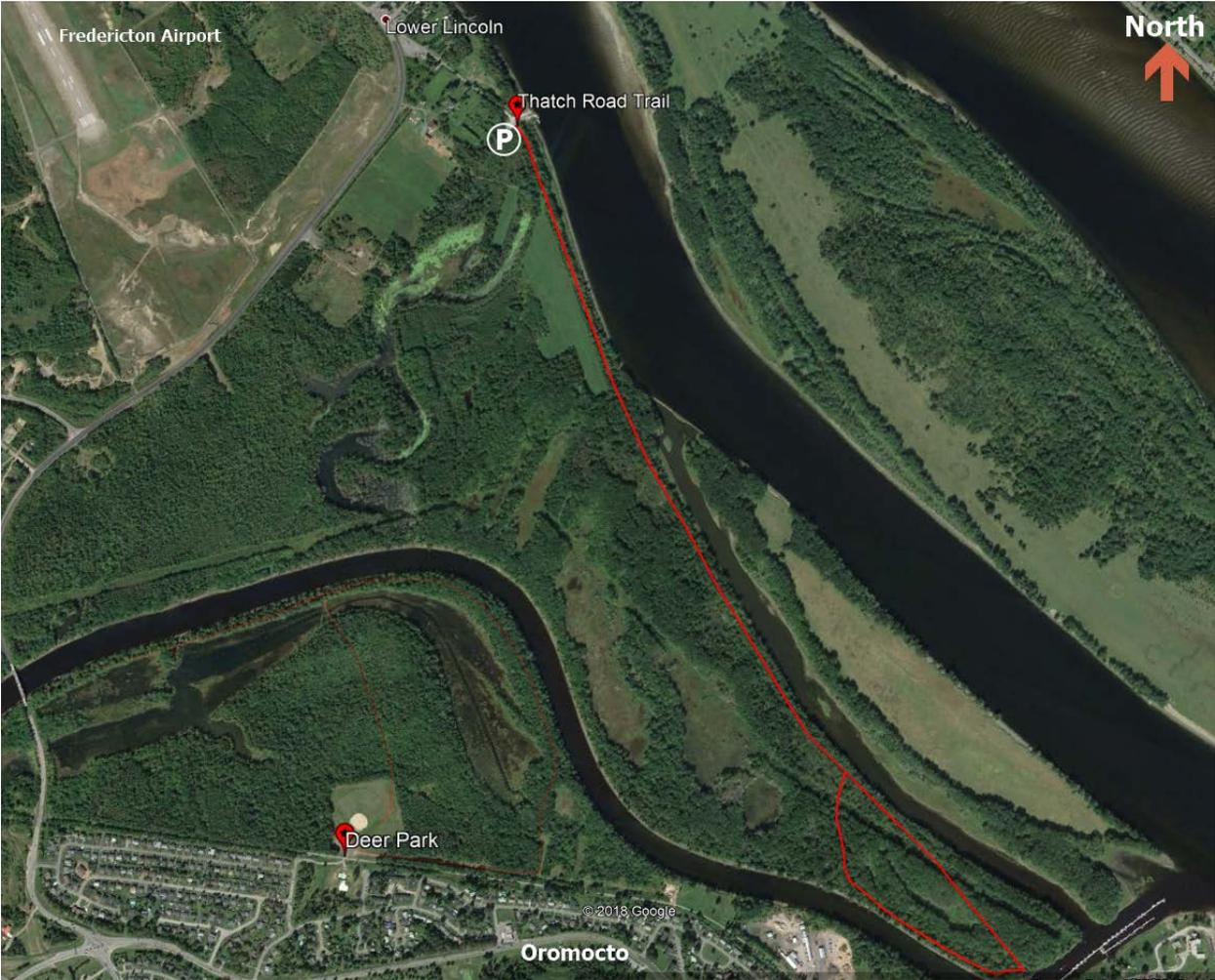
Many birds can be seen near the trail, along with many flowers and other plants.

This is a good place to practice identifying plants, and is a nice example of the environment found along the Saint John River.

Along the paved trail, there are a couple of side trails leading down to the river.

The Thatch Road Trail ends at an old stone bridge abutment overlooking the marina, where you can sit and eat your lunch as boats go by on the Oromocto River.

Just up from the bridge abutment, there is a rougher side trail forming an 850 meter loop that re-connects with the paved trail about 1/4 way back to the parking area.



SUNPOKE DIKE TRAIL (45° 46.226'N 66° 33.071'W)

Distance: 2.1 km loop

2.9 km return if you park at the boat landing.

This trail follows a dike around a wetland area.

Getting There:

From Oromocto, take the Broad Road to Geary, then turn onto the Branch Road.

***The Branch Road leads past Speedway 660**

Drive about 800 meters and turn right onto the French Lake Road.

Drive about 5 km to an intersection and turn left onto Merritt Smith Road.

Drive about 600 meters and cross a bridge over the Oromocto River.

50 meters after the bridge, turn right onto a dirt road and after 80 meters park near a boat landing.

***with a little care you can drive another 400 meters past the boat landing and park near a fire pit.**

The Trail:

From the boat landing, follow the trail for 400 meters, before it forms a 2.1 km loop around a wetland.

