

Eldon Hazlet – First Day Hike

Check in at the Site Office

Self-Guided Hikes

Cherokee Trail - 3.0 miles Trail to cemetery is wheelchair accessible. Three miles of winding trails take you through a mature oak-hickory forest, over four footbridges and along the shoreline for great views of the lake. Loop 1 (1.5 miles) has been developed as a tree identification trail and connects to the Osage Youth Campground. Loop 2 (.75 mile) passes by views of the lake. Loop 3 (.75 mile) passes by Burnside Cemetery, a pre-Civil War cemetery where some of Clinton County's original settlers are buried.

Kaskaskian Trail - 2.5 miles This trail is named in honor of the Mississippian Native Americans who inhabited the Kaskaskia River Valley from approximately A.D. 900-1300. The Kaskaskian Trail leads the hiker through a variety of natural habitats and offers excellent wildlife viewing opportunities. The trailhead is at the park office, although the trail may be accessed from many areas including the Illini Campground, Osage Youth Campground, Pawnee Trail and the Apache Day Use Area.

Illini Trail - 1.5 miles Trail is wheelchair accessible. Located across from the campground store, this trail winds through a restored prairie and loops around the Homer Guthrie Fishing Pond. The fishing pond is open to bank fishing.

Pawnee Trail - 1.0 mile The Pawnee Trail may be accessed from two trailheads. The main trailhead is located at the parking lot area of the Lakefront Cottages; it is also accessible from the Cherokee Trail parking lot. Beginning at the Cottage Trailhead, the trail runs along a high ridge overlooking the lake, past the Burnside Cemetery, to the Cherokee Trail parking lot and through a successional growth field. From the cemetery to the Cherokee Trail parking lot, Pawnee and Loop 3 of Cherokee share the same trail.

Eagle Trail - 0.75 mile This trail was developed in May 1996 by a local Boy Scout as part of his requirements to earn the rank of Eagle Scout. Located near the north end of the Illini Campground, the Eagle Trail offers an easy hike on level terrain.

Wetland Educational Trail - 0.5 mile This trail is wheelchair accessible. This trail winds through a permanent pond and moist-soil habitat. It is an excellent place to view waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds. Interpretive signs along the trail educate hikers on the benefits of wetlands.

Bluestem Trail - 0.5 mile This trail is wheelchair accessible. A quarter-mile interpretive loop trail winds through a three-acre prairie restoration area directly across from the park office. More than 50 species of native prairie plants are present, including both little and big bluestem grasses, compass plant, rattlesnake master, purple coneflower, wild quinine and blazing star.

Guided Trail Hikes

Eldon Hazlet State Park has more than nine miles of hiking trails throughout the park. Guided hikes conducted by the park's interpreter are offered periodically during the summer camping season. For scheduling information, contact the Site Interpreter at the park office or call 618/594-3015.

Trail Descriptions

Cherokee Trail [3.0 miles]

Trail to cemetery is wheelchair accessible. Three miles of winding trails take you through a mature oak-hickory forest, over four footbridges and along the shoreline for great views of the lake. Loop 1 (1.5 miles) has been developed as a tree identification trail and connects to the Osage Youth Campground. Loop 2 (.75 mile) passes by views of the lake. Loop 3 (.75 mile) passes by Burnside Cemetery, a pre-Civil War cemetery where some of Clinton County's original settlers are buried.

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runs along a high ridge overlooking the lake, past the Burnside Cemetery, to the Cherokee Trail parking lot and through a successional growth field. From the cemetery to the Cherokee Trail parking lot, Pawnee and Loop 3 of Cherokee share the same trail.

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Trail Reminders

- Pack it in, pack it out.
- Keep pets on leashes.
- Do not disturb wildlife.
- Bikes and horses are not allowed on the hiking trails.
- Poison ivy is very common along the hiking trails. Learn to identify it and avoid it.























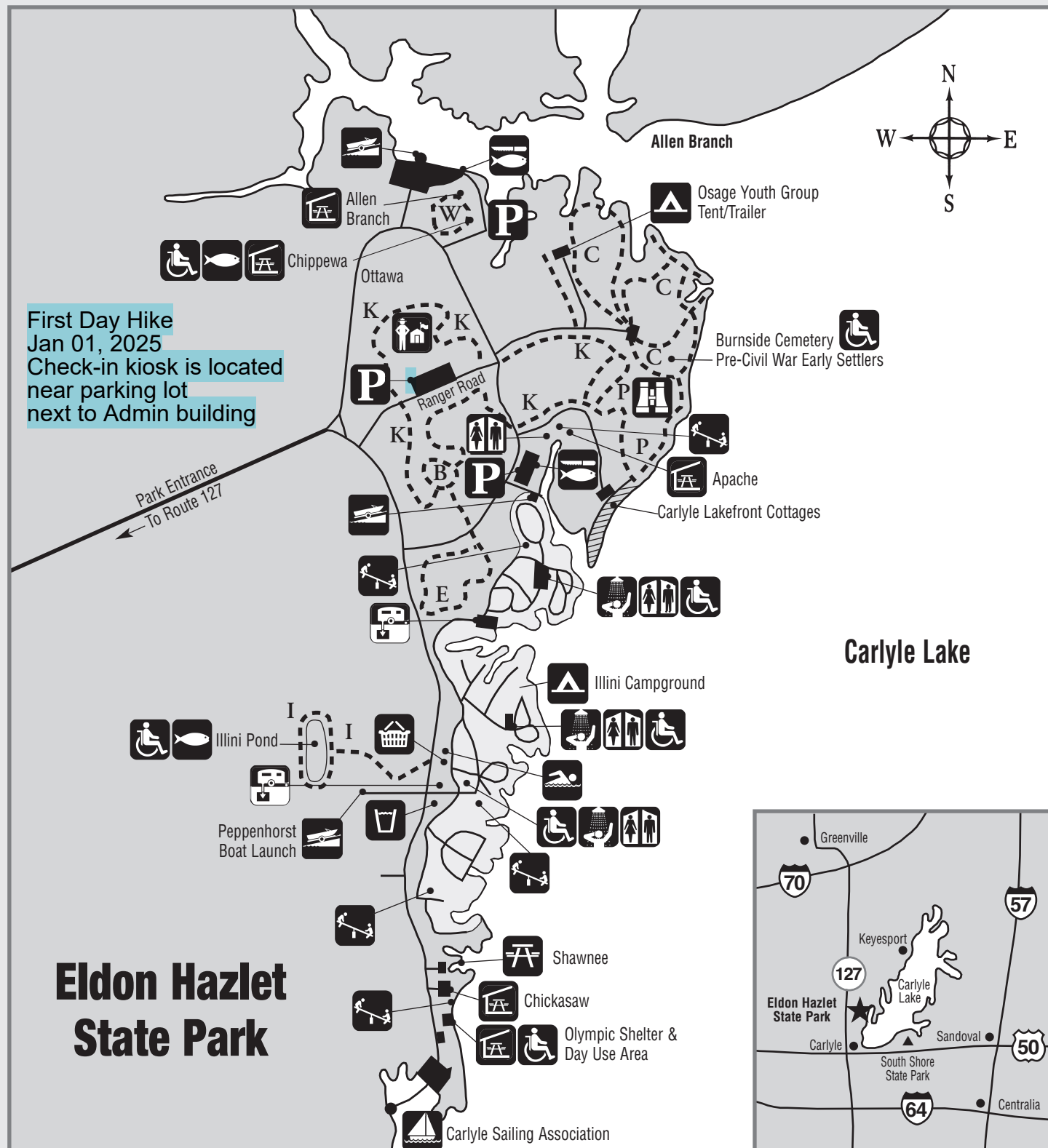
Map Trail Key

C	Cherokee Trail	.....	3.0 mi
K	Kaskaskian Trail	.....	2.5 mi
I	Illini Trail	.....	1.5 mi
P	Pawnee Trail	.....	1.0 mi
E	Eagle Trail	.....	.75 mi
W	Wetland Trail	.....	.5 mi
B	Bluestem Trail	.....	.25 mi

All Hiking Trails are closed Wednesday through Sunday from early November to early January due to a controlled pheasant hunting program in the park during these dates.

Legend

	Launching Ramp		Picnic Shelter
	Campground		Playground
	Campground Store		Restrooms
	Fishing		Sailboat Harbor
	Fish Cleaning Station		Sanitary Dumping Station
	Handicapped Accessible		Scenic Overlook
	Nature Trail		Showers
	Parking		Swimming Pool
	Park Office		Drinking Water
	Picnic Area		Viewing Area



Cold Weather Hiking — tips from the American Hiking Society

<https://americanhiking.org/resources/cold-weather-hiking/>

Hiking during the winter can be fun as long as you prepare with these tips. In addition to these tips and hints, remember to follow normal safety practices as well when hiking in the winter. Be sure of the gear you take with you and if you have any specific questions, ask a local outdoor expert so you can stay safe.

Just because the temperature has fallen like the leaves of a tree doesn't mean you can't have an enjoyable hike outside. With a little extra preparation, hiking in the winter can be every bit as enjoyable as hiking during the warmer months. If you have the gear for a warm-weather hike, you can easily modify it for the cold. Before you go, be sure to follow a few of these guidelines to stay safe and warm. Winter can be one of the most peaceful seasons to enjoy some solitude on the trail, but it also comes with increased risks that hikers need to prepare for.

Check the conditions

Trail and road crews aren't as active in the winter, so it's always a good idea to check trip reports to get a sense of conditions on the trail and access to the trailhead before you hit the road.

Dress in layers

While it is perhaps nice to have a huge, fluffy parka on the ski slopes, it really isn't practical for the trail. Instead, take several layers you can peel off or put on when you stop and go on the trail. Your base layer should be a wicking fabric that will pull your sweat away from the skin. Pack layers for every part of your body, not just your torso. Overheating is a dangerous threat since excessive moisture that isn't allowed to escape can freeze and cause hypothermia. If you ever wondered why some of your jackets have zippers under the armpits, they help vent sweat vapor and prevent your clothes from getting wet.

Pack extra layers for when you take breaks and in case you are delayed due to an injury or unforeseen situation. Could you survive the night if you had to? Check the forecasted low temperatures to be prepared for the unexpected. Carrying all of the 10 Essentials of Hiking is especially important in the winter.

Wear a hat

Our heads are filled with oxygen-carrying capillaries which fuel our brains and consume one-third of the body's energy. During the colder months, it is important to keep your head covered to maintain function and not lose precious body heat. You may want to bring a warmer/heavier hat for rest periods.

Keep the breeze out

An often overlooked jacket feature—a hooded jacket—helps seal out frigid air from around the neck and shoulders. Hoods also help with layering the head. When you stop for a break, throwing on a hood can help regulate your temperature during breaks.

Keep your water bottle warm

Staying hydrated in cooler temps is just as important as it is in the summer. Take extra precautions to keep your water from freezing.

- A foam sleeve like a koozie will increase the time it takes water to freeze in a bottle. In very frigid temps, some hikers will even add an active hand warmer inside the insulative sleeve.
- Water tends to freeze at the top of a water bottle, so carry the bottle cap down to prevent the opening from freezing first. Ensure the bottle properly seals to prevent leaks.
- Start your hike with warm water instead of cold tap water to slow down the freezing process.

...Keep your water bottle warm

- Nothing warms your body or your spirits like warm liquid on the trail or by a campfire. Vacuum-sealed water bottles and thermoses can help keep warm drinks steamy for hours, and they can also be used as standard water bottles.
- Sip water often to stay hydrated and also to check the state of your water. Is it starting to freeze?
- Do you hike with a hydration reservoir? Manufacturers make special hose, bite valve, and reservoir sleeves to slow down the water from freezing, but in many cases, reservoirs will freeze faster than traditional water bottles.
- Store soft-sided flasks or slim water bottles on the inside of your jacket – properly sealed, of course.

Watch your step

Snow and ice are often synonymous with cold-weather hiking. Adequate footwear and traction are part of the 10 Essentials of Hiking, and snow and ice present various hazards in the winter. The conditions should influence what traction and flotation devices are used. In deep snow, snowshoes reduce how much a hiker sinks into the powder. On packed snow and ice, micro-spikes and other traction devices provide additional traction for better footing. Many brands design traction that can slip over shoes and boots, and different designs are suitable for different conditions, terrain, and activities.

Trekking poles are also highly recommended, especially in snowy and icy conditions. Poles provide more points of contact with the ground, which increases balance and traction.

Keep batteries warm

Batteries in most electronics lose effectiveness in cooler temperatures. Pack batteries and electronics in interior pockets so body heat can keep them warm. This is especially important if you use any electronic devices as a primary form of navigation. American Hiking recommends hikers carry paper maps and a compass (and know how to use them) in the event a navigation device malfunctions.

Don't toss the sunscreen

While this is most important if you are hiking in a snowy region, winter hikers often forget about the sun's glare reflecting off of white snow.

Protect your eyes

UV-rated snow goggles or sunglasses that provide adequate protection from bitter wind and the sun's harsh rays should be used even when it's cloudy and not super bright at the beginning of a hike.

Pack freeze-resistant snacks

It can be discouraging to take a snack break only to find your favorite snack hard as a rock and uneatable in cold temps. Chewy and gooey snacks often become hard to eat in winter conditions. Either keep these snacks in an interior pocket or pack snacks that are less affected by cold temps. You can test which snacks work best by putting various snacks in your freezer to see what gets too hard to enjoy out on the trail. Crackers, nuts, and solid chocolate typically work well. Warm snacks are even more appetizing when it's cold outside so consider stashing your next snack in an interior pocket to warm it up a little before your next snack break.

Be prepared for shorter days

As early as October, dusk settles earlier and more quickly than in the summer. Have a good idea of the usable daylight hours before going hiking. Always carry a headlamp or flashlight with extra batteries.