

# Checklist

- Beaver
- Beaver dam
- Bird nest
- Great blue heron
- Tree swallow
- Mallard
- Painted turtle
- Dragonfly
- Yellow iris
- Beaver lodge
- Muskrat
- Canada goose
- Red-winged blackbird
- Wood duck
- Fish
- Snapping turtle
- Cattail
- Water lily

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*This quest was written by volunteers Susan Hale and Robert Nicholas. Arrye Rosser updated it in 2014.*

revision date APR 2014

# How to Quest

Quest clues and maps—created by teachers, volunteers, and/or park staff—will help you discover the natural and cultural gems of the Ohio & Erie Canalway. At the end of each quest is a hidden treasure box. Sign your name in the logbook, stamp this page, and return the box to its hiding place.

**STAMP HERE**

**The questing season runs from April 15 through November 15.**

Notice a problem or have suggestions for improving this quest? Contact Arrye Rosser at 440-546-5992 or [arrye\\_rosser@nps.gov](mailto:arrye_rosser@nps.gov).

# About This Program

I'm Arrye Rosser, interpretive and education specialist at Cuyahoga Valley National Park. I'd like to thank everyone who helped fulfill my dream of bringing questing to Ohio. This project was made possible by the generous support of a 2010 Parks as Classrooms grant from the National Park Service and is a partnership between many organizations.

So far, more than 100 teachers, volunteers, and park staff have been involved in writing and field testing Canalway Quests. Our plan is to create many more in the years ahead. If you would like to volunteer, contact me at 440-546-5992 or [arrye\\_rosser@nps.gov](mailto:arrye_rosser@nps.gov).

Special thanks to Emily Bryant and Steven Glazer.

The Ohio & Erie Canalway celebrates the rails, trails, landscapes, towns, and sites that grew up along the first 110 miles of the canal that helped Ohio and our nation grow.

**For more information and to get copies of other quests, visit [ohioanderiecanalway.com](http://ohioanderiecanalway.com) and search under Activities for Questing.**



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# Canalway Quest

## Beaver Marsh Quest

Look for an abundance of wildlife on this easy walk to a popular wetland.

## Planning Ahead

This treasure hunt takes 60 minutes or less, depending on how long you linger. Walking surfaces are flat and firm. This quest is accessible by wheelchair or stroller. Seated visitors may need assistance reaching the quest box. You will need a pen or pencil to fill out the nature checklist and sign the logbook. Some people prefer using their own signature stamp and ink pad or marker. Binoculars, insect repellent, and walking shoes are recommended. If you want to see beavers, they are most active in the evening and early morning.

## Getting There

Start in the parking lot at Ira Trailhead, 3801 Riverview Road, north of Ira Road, Peninsula, Ohio 44264.

## Clues

Welcome to Cuyahoga Valley National Park!  
Grab a pen to write with before you embark.

On the back of these Beaver Marsh questing clues  
Is a nature checklist that you can use.

Beaver Marsh is rich in biodiversity.  
Check off the many plants and animals you see.

At the marsh, you'll learn the beavers' tale.  
Move forward now from kiosk to trail.

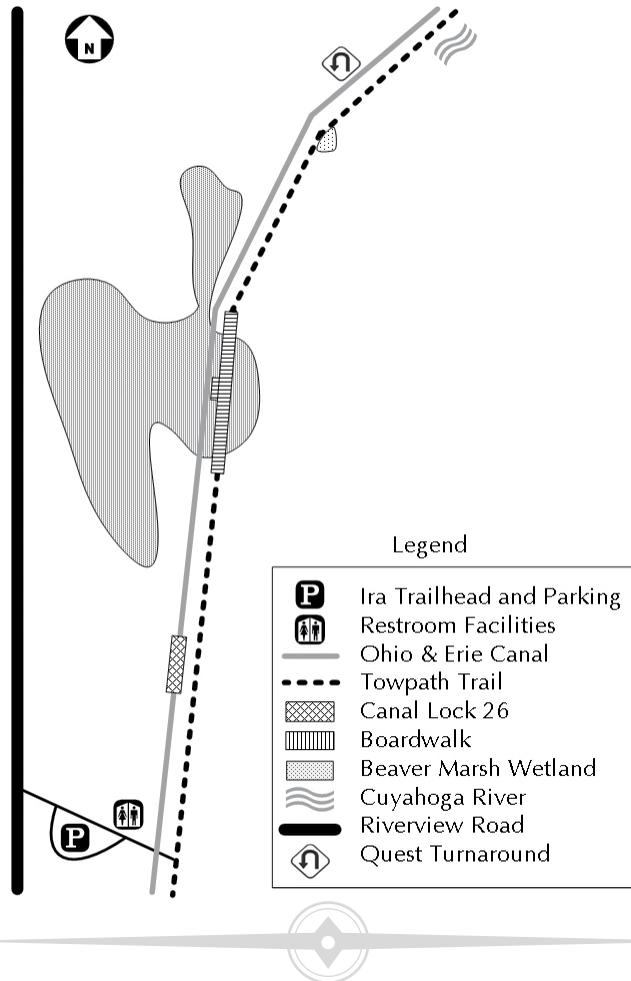
Turn to the left—you are now heading north.  
Off to the beaver lodge and dams, go forth!

Others are in motion, so use caution as you hike.  
Be alert for walkers, runners, and passing bikes.

Keep your eyes and ears open along the way.  
There is much wildlife here, including birds of prey.

Pause at Lock 26—"Pancake," it was called—  
Where canal boats once passed, and goods they hauled.

The canal ran south and north, moving goods to ply,  
Now home to muskrat, beaver, and butterfly.



As you trek northward, count the spruce trees,  
No further than the thirteenth on the left, if you please.

Turn to face the canal, with its water so serene—  
Here the evidence of beaver can be seen.

That gouge in the tree—did beaver's teeth gnaw,  
Cutting through the wood like an efficient saw?

They will use the wood to build their lodge, of course,  
But bark is also part of their natural food source.

Trek onward to the boardwalk, enjoying the view.  
Are you checking off the wildlife? Good for you!

Be sure to look up, down, and all around.  
Check the fallen logs, where painted turtles abound.

Near the boardwalk's edge, on the right, a dam you'll see:  
The work of the beaver—busy as a bee.

Up from the bottom they brought the mud,  
Building a system of dams, the land to flood.

Turn left to the benches, watching the water below.  
Glimpse waterfowl, fish, and snapping turtles so slow.

Go to the observation deck's far wall for a minute  
And read the beaver's tale on the wayside exhibit.

Look at the marsh's right bank for a house of sticks.  
This lodge is where beavers raise their kits.

Though not always in view, beavers are near,  
But it may take several visits before you spy one here.

Beavers get into their lodges from below,  
So you won't see the entrances—they're underwater, you know.

Walk on, but pause before the boardwalk ends.  
Down in the mud, find footprints from animal friends.

Again look to the left and to the right—  
More beaver dams are now in sight.

Hike past the milepost marked 28  
Designating canal distance, as history relates.

Follow the canal on your left 'til you see  
Another beaver dam made so craftily.

Turn around here, where the watered canal becomes nearly dry.  
Backtrack for our hidden box, acting like a top secret spy.

Pause just before the boardwalk to see who else is there too.  
From all others, your actions must stay out of view.

Casually sit at the far end of the left bench, facing the railing.  
Reach up into its backrest and remove a plastic box without failing.

Without being noticed, sign the log and stamp your clue sheet.  
Now return everything to its hiding spot, your behavior discreet.

Before you head back on your merry way,  
Reflect on what you've seen during your visit today.

We hope you have enjoyed this nature-filled quest.  
On your way back to Ira, make your checklist the best!

