



# VANRIPER CONSERVATION AREA & WHITLOCK NATURE PRESERVE

## NATURAL LAKESHORE

Tall canopy provides nesting sites for interior forest dwelling birds.

### FOREST STRUCTURE

The mature forest contains several layers of habitat from the forest floor to the canopy, offering diverse habitat niches that are occupied by bird species specially adapted to each layer.

Screech Owl occupies the forest interior

Cavities in mature trees offer nesting opportunities for owls, woodpeckers, raccoons, and flying squirrels.

Fallen logs provide cover for forest salamanders.



Blue-headed Vireo occupies the upper canopy



Black-throated Green Warbler occupies the canopy interior



American Redstart occupies the forest edge



Wood Thrush occupies the understory

Undisturbed shoreline habitat is rare along Cayuga Lake, yet in demand by migrating birds (and nature lovers). The 1,900 feet of protected shoreline, along with 83 acres of diverse forests, gullies with small streams, and successional fields provides important breeding and migration stopover opportunities for song birds, owls, waterfowl, water birds, raptors, and other wildlife. The scarcity of wooded lakeshore concentrates wildlife and birds in special places like this preserve.



### AERIAL VIEW LOOKING WEST

- ..... Trail - 1/4 mile
- ==== Lake Access Lane - 1/3 mile, suitable for canoe/kayak access. Foot traffic only.
- Whitlock Nature Preserve
- VanRiper Conservation Area



Common Loon

### LAKE SHORE

The shore features a narrow rocky beach abruptly backed by steep forested slopes. Battered by storm waves and scoured by shifting ice, the hardy vegetation is dominated by cottonwood and poplar trees with interspersed native and non-native shrubs.

### UNDISTURBED SHORELINE

Mammals find cover for safe access to water, forest birds find a safe stopover during migration and foraging opportunities over open water, while water birds find protection from the disturbance of land-based human activity.

### WATERBIRDS

- Common loon – seasonal migrant with occasional wintering birds as well as non-breeding birds in summer.
- Osprey – can be seen fishing in productive lake waters.
- Bald Eagle – increasing in numbers throughout the Finger Lakes.
- Ducks and Geese – feed and rest during migration.

## LATE SUCCESSIONAL DIVERSITY



Mature forests on the lakeshore slopes feature diverse hardwood stands dominated by red and white oak, and sugar maple. Old forests support a diverse array of spring wildflowers including trout lily, white trillium, May apple and false Solomon seal. Ferns are abundant, especially Christmas fern and evergreen woodfern. Many layers of habitat support a diversity of mammals, birds, and amphibians.

Watch out for poison ivy!

MCMAMARA

Aerial Photo by Bill Hecht