

## Loop Details

### Goldfinch Loop (2.75 miles - easy)

The Goldfinch Loop can be accessed at two locations along Priester Road, as well as from the East Patrol Road near Gate 3. This trail consists of firebreak roads and buried utility corridors that are very flat and are the widest, most open trail found at Patuxent River. The forest that surrounds this trail is a mix of pines and deciduous hardwoods. Wildlife that frequents this area includes gray squirrels, wild turkeys, and white-tailed deer.

### Bluebird Loop (0.9 miles - moderate)

The Bluebird Loop can be accessed from Priester Road and is also connected to the Vireo Loop. This short but hilly trail traverses a mix of pine and deciduous forest. Sections of this trail tend to be wet at times and can be good places to spot amphibians in the spring. A unique feature to this trail is the small portion that parallels an open grassland. Keep an eye out for grassland birds in this area.

### Vireo Loop (0.75 miles - moderate)

Parking for the Vireo Loop can be found near Sewall Pond. Enter the trail near the former Mattapany Day Camp or along Priester Road. This trail is one of the most scenic, including views of both Sewall and Holton ponds. The section that is west of Priester Road wraps around Sewall Pond and has wooden bridges that cross its headwaters. There is also an overlook at the trail's high point for viewing wildlife in the pond. The section to the east of Priester Road includes a wildlife viewing blind that overlooks Holton Pond. Turtles, wading birds, waterfowl, and bald eagles can often be seen around these ponds.

### Oriole Loop (0.65 miles - easy)

The Oriole Loop is accessed off of Shaw Road near Gate 3. This trail is short and flat, making it one of the easiest trails at Patuxent River. Sections of the trail parallel the banks of Holton Pond, providing opportunities to see waterfowl, turtles, and other wildlife. There are wood duck nest boxes along the edge of the pond. Look for them to be active in the spring.

### Cardinal Loop (1.60 miles - moderate)

There are three places along the East Patrol Road where the Cardinal Loop can be accessed. This trail is one of the longest trails and is somewhat hilly. Portions of this trail contain streams and seeps, making it wet at times, but there are wooden bridges covering most of these wet areas. This is one of the largest and least disturbed forests found on the installation, making it an ideal place to find forest interior dwelling species (FIDS) of birds.

## Bird Checklist

### Goldfinch Loop

- American Goldfinch (YR; OW)  Great Crested Flycatcher (Su; OW)  Pine Warbler (YR; F)  
 Downy Woodpecker (YR; F)  Yellow-billed Cuckoo (Su; OW)  Wild Turkey (YR; OW)  
 Summer Tanager (Sp, Su; OW)  Chuck-will's-widow (Su; OW)  Blue Jay (YR; F)

### Bluebird Loop

- Eastern Bluebird (YR; G)  Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (Su; F)  American Robin (YR; OW)  
 Indigo Bunting (Sp, Su; OW)  White-breasted Nuthatch (YR; F)  Cooper's Hawk (YR; F)  
 Mourning Dove (YR; OW)  Red-bellied Woodpecker (YR; F)  Brown Thrasher (YR; Sc)

### Vireo Loop

- White-eyed Vireo (Sp, Su; Sc)  Eastern Screech-owl (YR; F)  Belted Kingfisher (YR; W)  
 Red-eyed Vireo (Sp, Su; F)  Common Yellowthroat (Sp, Su; Sc)  Gray Catbird (YR; OW)  
 Green Heron (Sp, Su, F; W)  Acadian Flycatcher (Sp, Su; F)  Bald Eagle (YR; F)

### Oriole Loop

- Orchard Oriole (Sp, Su; OW)  Great Blue Heron (YR; W)  Wood Duck (YR; W)  
 Carolina Chickadee (YR; F)  Red-winged Blackbird (YR; W)  Song Sparrow (YR; OW)  
 Tufted Titmouse (YR; F)  Red-tailed Hawk (YR; OW)  Carolina Wren (YR; OW)

### Cardinal Loop

- Northern Cardinal (YR; OW)  Scarlet Tanager (Su; F)  Wood Thrush (Sp, Su; F)  
 Northern Parula (Sp, Su; F)  Red-shouldered Hawk (YR; F)  Ovenbird (Su; F)  
 Hooded Warbler (Sp, Su; F)  Pileated Woodpecker (YR; F)  Barred Owl (YR; F)

### Key

YR - Year round      F - Forest      G - Grassland  
 Sp - Spring      Sc - Scrub      W - Wetlands  
 Su - Summer      W - Winter      OW - Open Woodlands



### Trail Etiquette/Rules

- Please keep to the trails.
- Leave no trace; take only pictures.
- Respect all wildlife.
- Take all trash out with you.
- Keep pets on a leash; pick up after your dogs.
- **Watch and listen for bicycles** (Goldfinch & Cardinal Loops).



## KYLE E. RAMBO NATURE TRAIL



The Kyle E. Rambo Nature Trail, formerly the Pepperbush Trail, was renamed in October 2021 in honor of the retired Conservation Director whose passion and dedication built a lasting natural resources legacy at Naval Air Station Patuxent River. The Kyle E. Rambo Nature Trail is located on the southern tip of the Naval Air Station. It was built in 1983 and 1984 by members of the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) and installation Natural Resources staff. The trail covers a variety of woodland and wetland habitats and is mostly flat but does experience some hilly terrain on the Vireo (green) and Bluebird (blue) loops. It's used by hikers, joggers, trail bikers, bird watchers, berry pickers, and nature photographers – all experiencing the natural side of Pax River in their own way. Volunteers primarily maintain it under the guidance of Natural Resources staff. While you will see some very large trees growing in the forests along the trail, realize that these are all “second growth” forests, having been cut over by humans on one or more occasions prior to the Navy's arrival in 1942. Additionally, the recreational fishing ponds were engineered by impounding naturally flowing streams.



### Biohazards on the Trail



While on the trail, there are a few precautions that should be taken. Ticks, chiggers, and mosquitoes are present and most active during the warmer months. Wearing long pants, tucking in shirts/pant legs, and applying repellent sprays all help prevent these insects from biting. Poison ivy is present along the trails. Wearing long pants and sleeves can help prevent skin contact with the oil from these plants, which can cause rashes, but staying on the trail is your best precaution. The northern copperhead is the only venomous snake found in Southern Maryland. Copperheads can be distinguished from non-venomous snakes in this area by their distinct triangle-shaped heads. They are rarely sighted but should be avoided if you come upon one.



# KYLLERRE RAMBO NATURE TRAIL

