

A Northern Refuge



Due to its geology and proximity to Lake Champlain, Shelburne Bay Park contains many plant species rarely found together. Like other large bodies of water, the lake moderates the temperatures of this northern climate, allowing many southern species to extend their range. The southern exposure of Allen Hill supports one of the northernmost stands of chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*). Also at the north end of its range, pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*) occurs along the shore next to native northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*). Hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*) along the western boundary of the park shade pink lady's slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), a large showy orchid, and fringed polygala (*Polygala paucifolia*) a diminutive pink wildflower.

Mosses such as rock spikemoss (*Selaginella rupestris*), lichens, and the rusty woodsia fern (*Woodsia ilvensis*), which grow only on thin soils, form an alpine-like community rarely found close to the lakeside habitat of blue flag (*Iris versicolor*) and flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) which grow in the shoreline marsh. The shoreline habitat is formed by organic debris deposited by northern winds. Its sedges and rushes provide a breeding area for bass and pike.



Maslowski/USFWS

The deep water south of Allen Hill is a favorable resting and feeding area for migratory waterfowl. Protected from the north wind by the steep side of the Hill, Canada geese, American Goldeneye (pictured), and Black Ducks frequent this area in large numbers during the fall migration. Migrating shorebirds feed along the shore here, and east of the LaPlatte River. In May the hemlocks swarm with migrating warblers feeding on insects.



Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

The limestone cliffs and thin soils of the Allen Hill ridgeline are occupied by northern white cedar, while white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and eastern hemlock dominate the shoreline.

Owned by the Town of Shelburne, Shelburne Bay Park consists of 93 acres, which can be explored extensively on foot. Bikers can reach Harbor Road, either by heading north on the Recreation Bike Path through the Park or going south on the Ti-Haul Trail.



Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission