

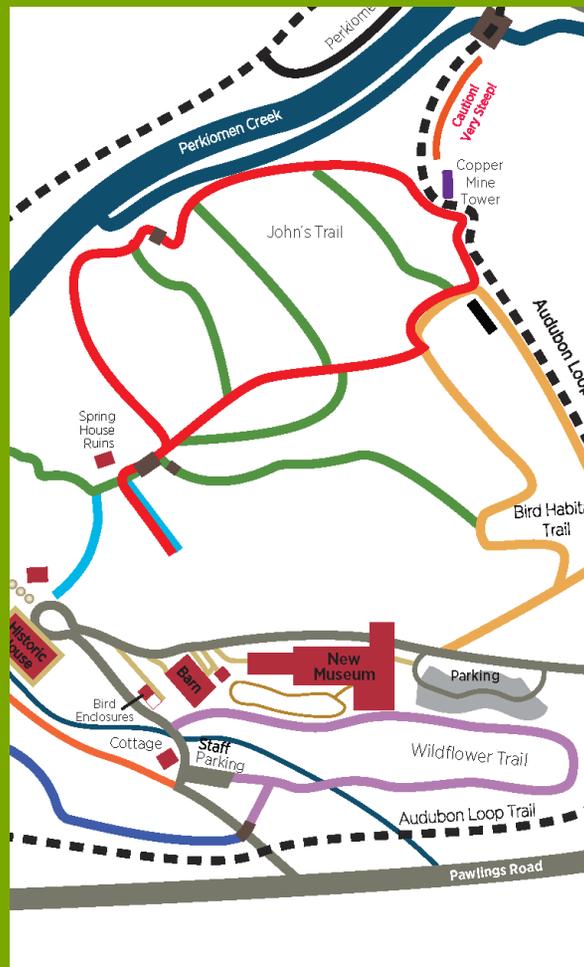
Welcome to the Tenderfoot Trail

This trail is specially designed for families with younger children to have fun and enjoy the outdoors at your own pace. Along your journey, you will find seven marked stops that correspond with this guide. Explore your surroundings, take a rest, share a story, and learn about John James Audubon and the nature that surrounds the Mill Grove estate.



Look for the trail marker you see above to follow the trail. Each numbered marker indicates a stop, which you will find in this guide.

Ready? Let's Go!



Tenderfoot Trail

This family-friendly hike is mild adventure for people of all ages. Discover the treats of the Mill Grove estate on this 1 mile hike that takes approximately 30 minutes to explore.

This hike was designed by Joseph Kaminetz in 2019 as part of an Eagle Scout Project.

HIKING TRAILS

Tenderfoot Trail

Explore Nature with Your Family



Learn about your local environment by adventuring along our Tenderfoot Trail. Ideal for family exploration. Discover nature and history at each stop along your journey.

 Audubon | John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove

A Montgomery County Historic Site



Discover more of our trails with our downloadable trail map at johnjames.audubon.org/visit/trails-and-outdoors



First Home in America



You are on the grounds of Mill Grove, the first home in America of John James Audubon. From 1803 to 1810, Audubon caught, tagged, and painted the many birds he encountered here. It was on these grounds he developed new and important ways to

depict wildlife in art. He built wire constructions that allowed him to position caught birds into "wild" stances, which had not been done before. He left Mill Grove in 1810 and traveled across North America and England before passing away in New York in 1851.



Leave No Trace

Take a moment to rest on the bench and look out over the Perkiomen Creek. Can you see ducks swimming in the creek? Do you hear songs of the birds in the forest? What can you smell in the fresh air? As good guests at Mill Grove, we need to make sure we preserve this natural beauty for everyone who walks these trails. Take in the natural wonder around you and see how many sounds, smells and animals you can identify. Now let's pretend to be forest animals and leave as little trace as possible that you were even there!



Fox Under the Bridge

See the stone bridge? On this bridge, everyone can use their imagination and play! Let's pick one person to be the Fox under the bridge, and everyone else can be birds that have to pass through. The silly Fox doesn't let anyone pass over the bridge though! Try to sneak past while they sleep, but if you wake them up, you have to go back to the beginning of the bridge. Go quickly and quietly so you don't wake the Fox!



Bird Banding

Scientists have many ways to study birds in the wild. One common practice is to catch birds in light nets and put a special numbered band on their leg. This band helps scientists who might catch the same bird later to see where they travel to, and whether the same birds will return to the same area. John James Audubon was one of the first people to band birds in America. He is famously known for banding Eastern Phoebe, which can still be seen at Mill Grove today.



**Coming up after Stop 4 is a flat, open stretch of the trail that is paved. If you like to run, this is the perfect spot to do so. Just remember, we share the forest with many animals and people. Deer often hide in these bushes, and you may come across other hikers or bikers.



Mining at Mill Grove

The Mill Grove estate wasn't just the first home of John James Audubon, it was also a working mine over the years. The tower you see was the chimney for the engine house that helped to pump water out of the mine. The mine is closed now, so let's use our imagination: what do you think the tower is?



Bird Blind

This large, wooden structure is a bird blind. Here, you can look at birds without them seeing you and flying away. Try peeking through the small windows and look at the birds flying around the field. If you can't spot any, try looking at the flowers that grow in the field. Are the plants in the meadow different than the ones in the forest?



Explore the Center

You are now at the end of your journey! To finish your adventure, please follow the trail back to the meadow leading to our Center. Go and enjoy the exhibits and Fledgling Trail that are a part of the John James Audubon Center experience! You can learn more about John James Audubon and the birds in this area through interactive activities for all ages. And don't forget to visit our non-releasable bird ambassadors down by the Historic Barn! Have fun exploring!