

L47F Louth Falls-Balls Falls Trail Guide - TorontoHiking.com

WAYPOINT INTERVAL	DISTANCE km	WAYPOINT-TO-WAYPOINT TRAIL DESCRIPTION
001- 002-001	1.8	This hike begins at the Louth CA and follows the Bruce Trail to the Twenty Trail and on to Balls Falls. From the parking lot on Staff Ave (001) at the Louth Conservation Area , take the access trail to connect to the Bruce Trail and head NW to Louth Falls (002) . Return to (001) .
002 - 003	3.6	From Louth Falls, return along the rocky Bruce Trail to Staff Avenue where you can view what is left of Upper Louth Falls . Head right (west) to Seventeenth St. and walk 1.3 km north to where the Bruce Trail enters the woods to the left past a chain link between posts. NOTE: There is no parking here (tow-away signs are posted.) Traffic is light on Seventeenth St (003) .
003 - 004	5.0	The trail follows a wide mowed grassy path past the swing and soon heads off to the right on a narrow path into more dense bush. At a Y-intersection, take the path to the left which heads downhill, curves around and crosses a wooden bridge over a tributary of Eighteen Mile Creek. At the intersection with the Jordan Trail keep to the left on the Bruce Trail. The trail wanders through the bush and comes to a wide rock strewn creek bed about 4 m across. This is Eighteen Mile Creek . It was dry in late August but in early Spring it would be more challenging to cross requiring stepping from rock to rock. Just past the creek and around the bend, another Y-intersection has the main trail heading off to the left up a slight slope. At still another Y-intersection, head to the left on the main trail that climbs steeply up to the top of the scarp. The trail rounds a corner and comes to the edge of a very deep gully and ahead you can see Eighteen Mile Creek Falls which was almost dry in late August but you could hear a trickle of water dropping. You can clearly see the different layers of rock in the waterfalls. The top overhang and the ledge further down are hard dolostone while the layers of shale underneath them have eroded more quickly. (004) .
004 - 005	5.5	The trail soon arrives at a T-intersection with the main trail heading off to the right. The trail now follows alongside Eighteen Mile Creek for a bit. There was no visible flow of water but the creek bed had many puddles of water. The trail descends and arrives at Nineteenth Avenue (005) .
005 - 006	6.0	The trail jogs a bit to the right and enters back into the woods with very little underbrush and heads uphill. The trail makes a long gradual climb to the top of the scarp and follows the edge of the escarpment above a subdivision and some enticing swimming pools below. The rock becomes more fractured due to weathering

with cracks between adjacent slabs before it reaches **Glen Road (006)**.

- 006 - 007 7.4 The trail crosses the road and jogs to the left uphill to meet the “**Twenty Trail**” leading to **Balls Falls** along the gorge. Down below is the rushing water of **Twenty Mile Creek** -in Spring that is, not now in August. The wide trail narrows down and becomes very narrow as it undulated along the edge over some tricky and sometimes slippery areas. Be careful and plant your feet carefully and watch where you are going. The trail comes to a section where there are huge boulders in the creek bed which make for an incredible set of rapids when water flow is high and literally smashing against the rocks. There are a few easy paths down to get closer to the action. Just before the wooden staircase going up the cliff edge, you can descend a trail close to the creek that heads towards the base of Balls Falls. Now you have a long steep climb up a set of wooden reinforced berms and wooden steps with a side cable covered in garden hose to aid your ascent. At the top is a well-placed rest bench in loving memory of John Gregory Moyer after the long climb up **(007)**. I can’t think of a bench on the Bruce Trail that is better placed.
- 007 - 008 8.2 You are now in the arboretum and the trial heads to the right and comes to a set of wooden steps leading down to the Balls Falls Conservation Area. Follow the gravel path past some exhibition buildings to cross a small bridge over to the the **Balls Falls** viewing area **(008)** . Here there is a large information display board and a long stone wall along the gorge edge for safe viewing of the falls. Unfortunately, the angle is less than ideal for falls viewing. You can continue along the Bruce Trail crossing the bridge over Twenty Mile Creek and along the other side of the gorge but the view is not too much better.
- 008 - 009 9.0 After viewing **Balls Lower Falls** and displays, head down to 6th Ave and either cross the bridge to your right or descend to the river bank and cross the small footbridge there. Across the river, turn left and follow the path on the west bank of Twenty Mile Creek. Stop to examine the ruins of the old woolen mill. It was built by George Ball in 1824 and used water diverted 100 m from the Upper Falls to power machinery that ran in the mill to manufacture fabrics. Continuing along the path will bring you to a flat stone viewing area with a metre high stone wall to keep the public back from the dangerous edge of **Balls Upper Falls (009)**. Some people climb over this wall for a closer view. If you decide to do so, exercise extreme caution. In the summer when there is only a trickle of water you can walk out onto the crest of the falls for a great view down the gorge. I find the Upper Falls more interesting than the more viewed lower falls. In summer it is not uncommon to see young people near the foot of the falls navigating the (slippery) rocks. At the far edge of the gorge a large volume of water has found its way under the cap rock creating an almost separate waterfall. The cap rock in this area is quite unstable.

Leaving the falls try the alternate route back to your left which travels through the woods high above the original path and gradually descends down to the road and the bridge. Retrace your path back to the parking lot.

If you only have one car and are walking back to the hike start at **(001)**, you can walk south on Twenty First St and then left on Seventh Ave to Seventeenth St. Then take Staff Ave back to the parking lot. These roads are not very busy.

Enjoy the hike and the day!