

Black Creek Wildlife Management Area

General Description

Black Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located in northwest Vermont adjacent to Lake Champlain in the town of St. Albans. Black Creek is formed by the confluence of Jewett and Stevens Brooks and drains into Lake Champlain just west of St. Albans Bay State Park. There is a pull-off on the north side of Route 36 where a canoe or small boat may be launched. The marsh extends north from the road. Access is primarily by boat. The State of Vermont owns 211 acres of this cattail-dominated emergent wetland. The WMA is managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

History

The area surrounding Black Creek, like much of the Champlain Valley, has been farmed for a long time. The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department acquired this property from the Elliott family in 1970. It was bought with Dingle-Johnson funds, which are federal funds dedicated to water-based recreation generated from a tax on fishing gear.

Habitat Features

Jewett and Stevens Brooks drain a low-lying basin in the Champlain Valley, combining near the lake to form Black Creek. Black Creek marsh is surrounded by farmlands, with a small wooded buffer on the west side. Water levels coincide with Lake Champlain levels.

The WMA is comprised almost exclusively of cattail marsh, with just a small segment of upland on the northwest side. As one travels north, the single channel splits into two. Riparian trees, such as silver maple and black willow, line the banks on the west side.

Muskrats are common in Black Creek. USFWS photo.



Muskrats can be trapped in season. Kathleen Decker photo.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Beaver and muskrat are common species, and are easily detected in the marsh. Otter and mink also occur, but are less readily seen. Raccoon prowl the edges of the marsh. Smaller mammals, such as the star-nosed mole and water shrew, can also be found in this habitat.

Birds This WMA offers excellent birding for wetland species. Ducks that may be found during breeding season are mallard, black and wood ducks, hooded mergansers and green-winged teals. Great blue and green-backed herons can be seen wading in the shallows. The rare black tern is an occasional visitor. American and least bitterns, soras and Virginia rails may hide in the cattails. Surrounding the marsh, and feeding on invertebrates flying over it, are songbirds such as eastern kingbirds, tree swallows and Baltimore orioles. Kingfishers may be seen diving for fish. During migration in spring and fall, many other species of water and marsh birds may be observed.

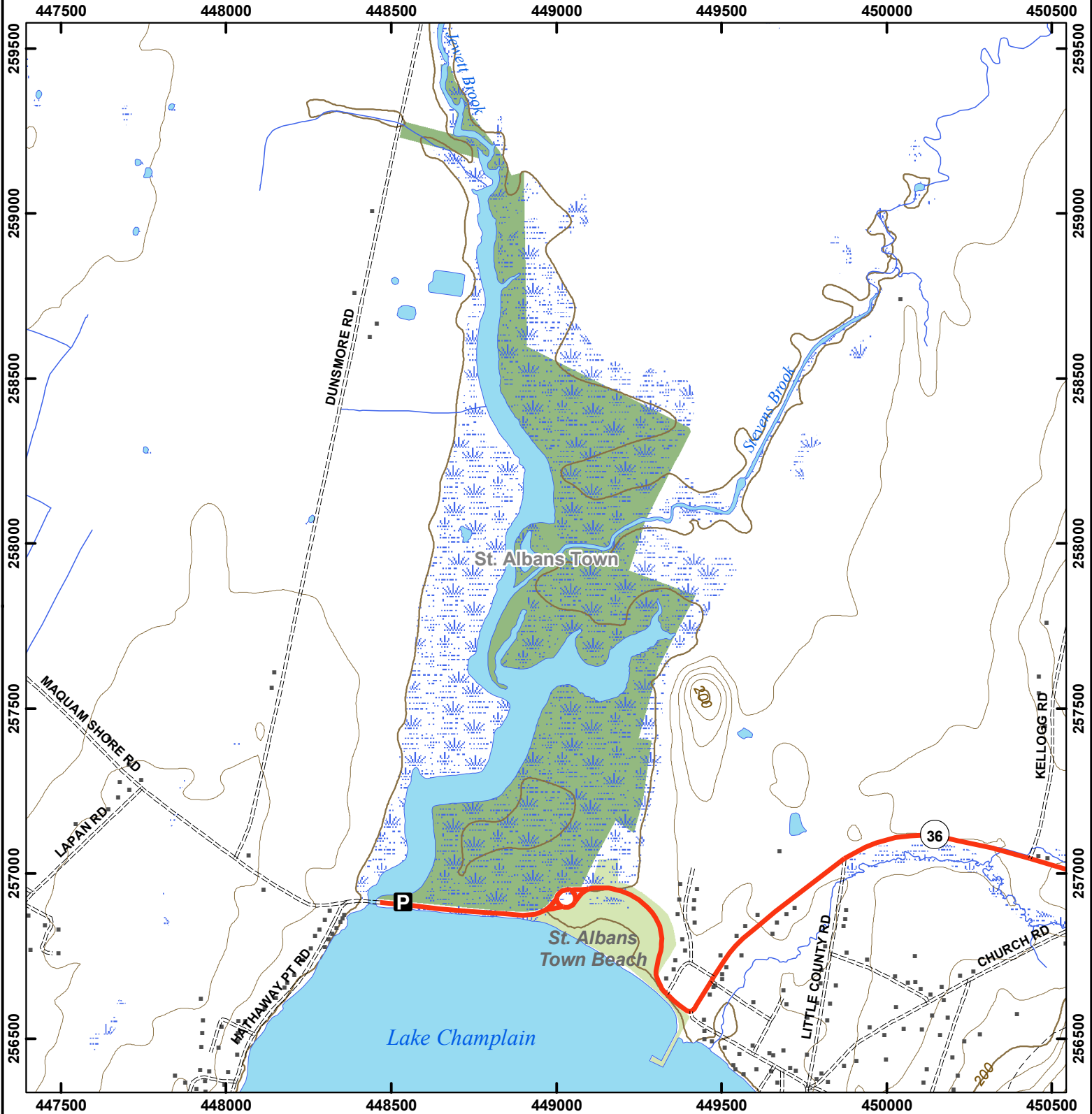
Reptiles and Amphibians One may find bullfrogs, green, pickerel and northern leopard frogs, and snapping, painted and northern map turtles in Black Creek. Snakes may include milk, DeKay's brown and garter snakes. Two less common species that may occur in Black Creek are the State-endangered western chorus frog and eastern ribbonsnake.

Fish Yellow perch, brown bullhead, northern pike, black crappie, pumpkinseed, rock bass and log perch are among the fish that occur in Black Creek.

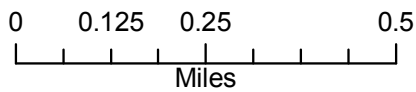


Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Black Creek Wildlife Management Area



Black Creek WMA: 211 acres



- Wildlife Management Area
- Other Public Land
- Private w/ Public Access
- Wildlife Viewing Areas
- Car-top Access
- P Parking
- Boat Ramp
- Gate
- Designated Camp Site During Big Game Seasons Only

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