



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Elephant Swamp Trail

New Jersey



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As you walk along the Elephant Swamp Trail, it's easy to see where it picked up the swamp part of its name. As for the rest, legend has it that in the late 1800s, an elephant got loose in the swamp when a traveling circus passed through Elk Township by railroad.

In 1878 the former Pennsylvania–Reading Railroad built the tracks as part of a route from Camden to Bridgeton. The tracks were removed a century later, and the Elephant Swamp Trail now stands in their place. To this day, the trail guide bids visitors to “listen closely for the footsteps of a wandering elephant.” The pathway is part of

the Circuit Trails, an expansive regional trail network across nine counties, including Gloucester County, which will eventually encompass 800 miles of trails.

The 5.1-mile community trail is unpaved, consisting mostly of large stones and wood chips that make it too bumpy for an enjoyable road or hybrid bike trip, though mountain bikes fare better. The natural flora and fauna of the trail (sometimes called the Elephant Swamp Nature Trail) make it ideal for a leisurely walk. From the path's northern endpoint, the western terminus of the [Monroe Township Bike Path](#) is only 3.4 miles northeast.

Starting at Elk Township Recreational Park, follow the wide, trail-like sidewalks through the park past baseball fields and a soccer complex, where the wooded area becomes heavier and the trail begins. The recreational complex falls behind as greenery flanks you on both sides. Civilization is never too far, with the parallel Railroad Avenue—a nod to the trail's history—just barely peeking through the trees to the right. This section attracts many hikers and dog walkers.

After 1.2 miles, you'll arrive at the trailhead at Elk Road, with a parking lot on the left. Equestrians may enjoy the trail from this point on. Along this portion, you'll find burbling brooks, bunnies hopping across the path, butterflies crowning your head, and a farm to the left completing this nature scene. Elk Township has provided nine interpretive signage stations detailing natural features, such as the pitch pine trees that define the Pine Barrens of southern New Jersey. No need to memorize what you read—if you have a smartphone, you can take this information with you thanks to the town's Elephant Swamp Guide app, or you can download the brochure from the trail's website.

The trail opens up around mile 2.9, when you'll pass through the parking lot of a volunteer fire department and cross Monroeville Road. The pathway parallels Three Bridge Road before crossing Island Road and continuing into a wooded



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States: New Jersey

Counties: Gloucester, Salem

Length: 5 miles

Trail end points: Recreation Complex (Aura) to
Baseball fields off US 40/Harding Hwy (Elmer)

Trail surfaces: Crushed
Stone, Dirt, Gravel, Woodchips

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Horseback Riding, Mountain
Biking, Walking, Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

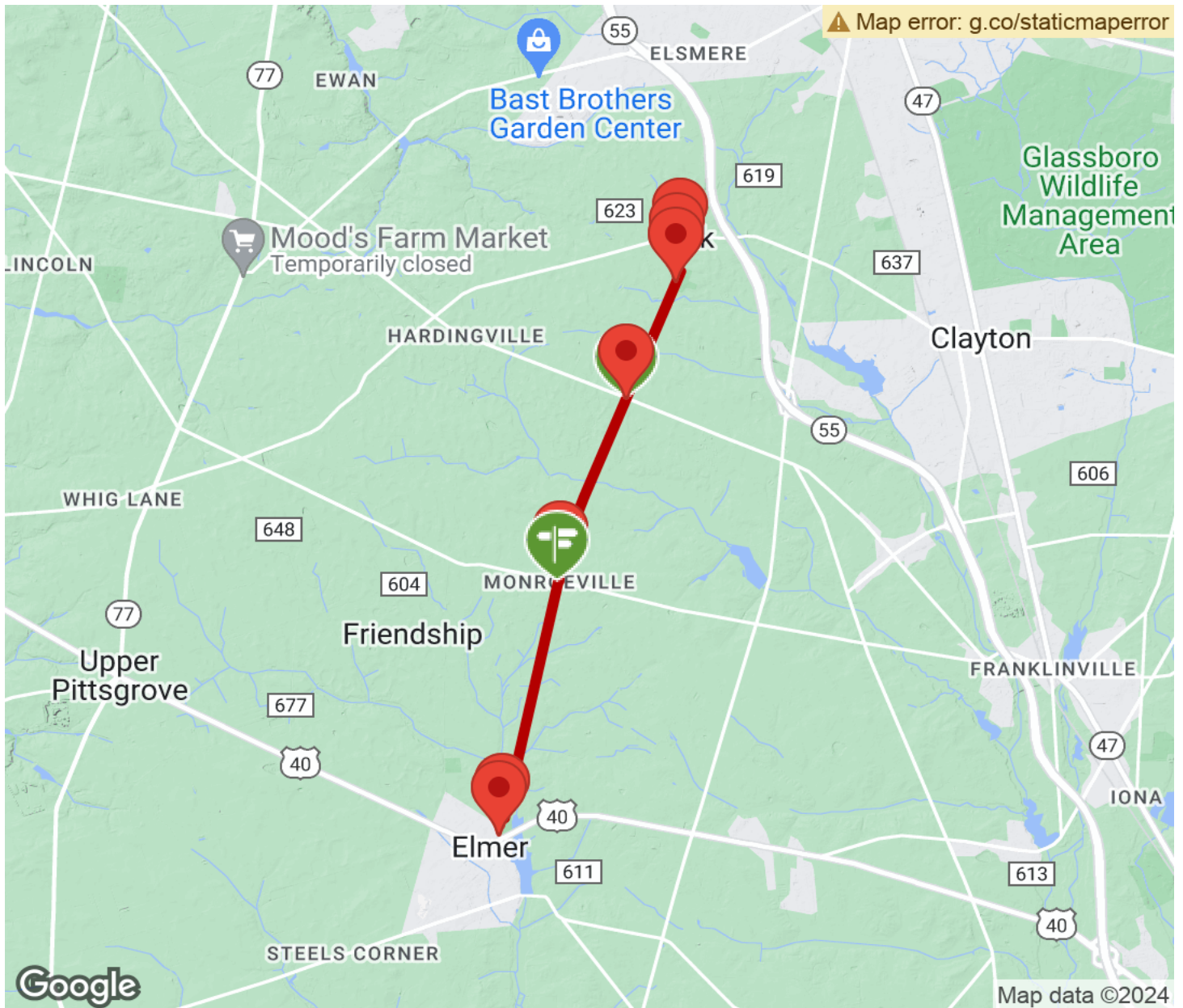
To reach parking at Elk Township Recreational Park from the intersection of the New Jersey Turnpike and the North-South Fwy./NJ 42 in Bellmawr, head south on the North-South Fwy., and take Exit 13. Drive 11.1 miles on NJ 55 S, and take Exit 48. Turn right onto Ellis Mill Road, and then immediately turn left onto Aura Road. Go 1.7 miles, and turn right onto Whig Lane. The park, which offers ample visitor parking, is on the left in 0.2 mile. Once parked, turn left onto Recreation Dr. to pick up the trail heading south.

To reach parking at the southern terminus from the intersection of the New Jersey Turnpike and the North-South Fwy./NJ 42 in Bellmawr, head south on the North-South Fwy., and take Exit 13. Drive 14.7 miles on NJ 55 S, and take Exit 45. Turn right onto Buck Road, and go 3.8 miles. Turn right onto US 40, and go 1.6 miles. Just after crossing Elmer Lake, turn right into Rotary Field. Look for a parking lot across from the baseball fields. Head north through the parking lot to the start of the trail.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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