Access for Persons with Disabilities - Portions of the Kingston Trail along the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park towpath are accessible for persons with disabilities; please contact the park office for further information. Text telephone users, please call the New Jersey Relay Service at (800) 888-7899.

Hours of Operation - Visitors can enjoy the park from Sunrise to Sunset.

Keep Your Park Clean - Through the Carry In/ Carry Out program you can help us keep your park clean and beautiful by carrying out your trash. Remember to recycle! Thank you for your cooperation.

Pets - Pets are permitted and must be on leash no longer than six feet in length and under the immediate control of the owner at all times. Please clean up after your pet.

Alcoholic Beverages are not permitted in the park.

Unauthorized Vehicles are not permitted.

* Biking is not permitted in the Cook Natural Area.

This brochure was funded by the NJDEP and the FHWA Recreational Trails Program.

KINGSTON TRAIL
Blue blaze • 4.5 miles • Hiking and biking • Easy

The Kingston Trail provides visitors a year round opportunity to explore the area's rich history and natural beauty. The trail traverses through state, county, and township lands and is jointly maintained by their park departments.

Visitors starting at the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park Office at the Mapleton Preserve will be greeted by a stately row of Princeton Sentsy gingko trees (Gingko biloba), along with various other specialty trees that were grown at this site as part of the operations of Princeton Nurseries.

Princeton Nurseries, whose operations started at this site in 1913, encompassed over 1,200 acres and was world-renowned for its innovative practices in cultivating horticulture specimens including the Dutch elm disease resistant 'Princeton Elm'.

The trail follows along an old nursery road bordered by the Flumer Arborenum and a row of Arborvitae - locally called a 'window'. From here, the trail crosses over Mapleton Road. PROCEED WITH CAUTION! Visitors are greeted by vast grasslands that were once used as the seed bed area for the Nurseries. Note the stunning row of Japanese maples that turn a magnificent shade of red during the autumn season.

The trail’s next important historic area is a portion of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. Here visitors have views of the D&R Canal, Carnegie Lake and the Kingston Lock Tender’s House.

The trail follows along the canal to the Kingston turning basin where canal boats could be loaded and unloaded or turn around. At this point visitors may either continue eastward on the Kingston Trail or join the main multiuse path of the D&R Canal.

As the Kingston Trail leads back to Mapleton Road, it runs between an old hedgerow of Osage orange (Maclura pomifera) trees and remnant row plantings of beech and dogwood from when the nursery was in operation.

After crossing Mapleton Road, the trail continues past the D&R Canal State Park office and alongside the former shipping office and large warehouses were once bustling with activity from the Princeton Nurseries operations. These buildings are managed by South Brunswick Township. Plans to preserve and interpret the historic Princeton Nurseries buildings are being developed.

Crossing Ridge Road brings visitors on the roadbed of a former branch line of the Camden & Amboy Railroad - the first railroad to operate in New Jersey. As they walk along the raised trail to South Brunswick Township’s Heathcote Park, visitors will be greeted by the croaking frogs living within the wetlands near Heathcote Brook. This township park has basketball courts, tennis courts, baseball fields and playground amenities for public use.

The trail then opens into the Heathcote Meadows Preserve – preserved Middlesex County land. This 89-acre parcel of land provides a glimpse of the rich farming history of the area. Lush grasslands are managed by the county to provide valuable habitat for many plant and animal species.

Visitors are led into mature forests of the Cook Natural Area (an officially-designated New Jersey State Natural Area) and to a crossing over a picturesque stone bridge. The trail then loops back to the rail trail leading back to the D&R Canal park office.
KINGSTON TRAILS of D&R Canal State Park

- Kingston Locktender's House
- Natural Area Cook
- Natural Area Mapleton
- Flemer Arboretum
- Heathcote Brook
- Millstone River
- Carnegie Lake
- Heathcote Meadows Preserve
- Heathcote Park
- (South Brunswick Twp)
- Municipal Open Space
- Greenwood Ave
- Academy St
- Ridge Rd
- Taylor Rd
- Monroe Ct
- Cleveland Ln
- Raynon Rd
- 683, 603, 605

Map of Kingston Trails of D&R Canal State Park.