

# The Path to Lily Park

By Sophia Watson

I've always dreamed of teleportation. The premise of a swirling portal leading to some unknown land has intrigued me for as long as I can remember. I never took the time to notice, however, that I had a portal a mere five minutes from my house. While it may not be a portal in reality, the Fox Creek Bridge feels like a gateway to another world. As I walk through the bridge, marveling at the intricate lattice design and listening to the rushing water of Fox Creek below, I begin to teleport to the marvelous world that is Lily Park.

In springtime, Lily Park is a magnificent landscape filled with lush greenery and the melodic sound of birds chirping. Lilies line the paths and cover garden beds strewn across the park, preparing to blossom in the summer. Bees buzz about, nestling their bodies in every flower they pass and pollinating them along the way. Small rabbits with tails like cotton balls hop along the edge of the tree lines as squirrels and chipmunks scurry up trees. The ground is soft and damp from early morning spring showers, and it squelches under the feet of people as they walk across the bright green grass. In spring, Lily Park begins to bud.

As spring slowly slips into summer, the lilies in full bloom release aromatic scents into the air whilst the sun basks everything in warm light. Flowers across the park drink up the pure, bright sunlight like a glass of lemonade on a hot muggy day. The cool, refreshing water in the creek runs over the rocks as tiny fish swim with the current. A tiny fairy garden is caught by the rays of sun, some of the figurines lying on their side in

damp brown mulch. The bright green of the tree leaves is a stark contrast to the beautiful blue of the clear sky above. In summer, Lily Park is in full bloom.

Summer turns to fall, and Lily Park undergoes another change. The air becomes cool and crisp, and the leaves turn a variety of reds and oranges as they fall from the trees. They crunch and crackle under the feet of small children running across the open landscape. Squirrels stir under piles of leaves built up around the bases of tree trunks and the leaves are whisked into the air by their fluffy tails. The wonderful aroma of wet leaves and autumn musk fills the cool air, and everything feels like a warm pumpkin spice latte. In fall, Lily park undergoes a metamorphosis.

Winter finally arrives, bringing powdery snow that dusts the ground and the frigid water turns to ice. Snow buries small fairy gardens and covers the picnic tables throughout the park. Miniscule footprints from forest animals are scattered across the ground, and snow falls from the tree branches as squirrels shimmy up the trees. The barren branches sway as gusts of wind blow through as if waving to someone far in the distance. Icicles begin to develop on a few, their sharp icy points clear and pristine. In winter, Lily Park freezes over.

The portal to the marvelous Lily Park also sees many changes throughout the seasons. Whether its roof is scattered with green “helicopter” seeds as the water rushes below, or coated with a blanket of pure white snow, the creek unmoving and frozen in place, Fox Creek Bridge remains a method of transportation to a wonderful place where the commotion of the real world is silenced. No matter the season, Lily Park and Fox Creek Bridge always remain incredibly beautiful locations unique to the Schoharie Valley, unmatched by any other place in the world.