



WELLFLEET
CONSERVATION
TRUST

Bayberry Hill Conservation Area

“The Austin B. and Theresa W. Wood Trail”

Area Description:

This relatively small parcel and short trail off Lieutenant Island Road provides a surprisingly varied and tranquil landscape of field, forest, and marsh. The walker can reduce the distance of the hike by taking the inner loop for a portion of the trail or extend the experience by stopping at a bench to gaze and reflect. The culminating Salt Marsh view, in particular, stimulates the walker to look at the play of light and the great vistas, the flight and feeding of land and sea birds, and to savor the aroma of pine and sea. Parking is on the shoulder of Lieutenant Island Road.

Location:

South Wellfleet, off Lieutenant Island Rd.

Directions:

Turn West on Lieutenant Island Rd. which is 0.3 miles south of the Marconi entrance and 1.5 miles north of the Wellfleet/Eastham town line. Follow this road for approximately 0.5 miles to the trailhead sign on the left. Please walk in from Lieutenant Island Rd. Do not park on Moody’s Way.

One of the treasures of Wellfleet is the intermingling of residences and landscapes of great natural beauty. When the walker begins the trail by walking on the town-owned road and turning left onto the path at the point where the road jogs slightly right, he will be skirting residential properties. Please respect the nearby property owners and make this a quiet and reflective experience. The trail passes through a Black Cherry and Black Locust grove and a patch of Carolina Rose. When the path passes an Apple tree on the right, the trail opens into a small meadow and then descends a gentle hill. The meadow is all that is left of the extensive farm fields here in earlier times. This land had fertile soil according to Simeon Deyo in his 1890 history of Barnstable County which enabled the early settlers of the area to have self-sufficient farms with small orchards, a cow or two, and, in the earliest days, a modest grain crop to be taken to the mill.

A spur off the trail provides a fine view of a small freshwater wetland, comprised chiefly of narrow-leaved cattail. This wetland holds water throughout the wettest seasons. It is host to a variety of plant and animal species completely different from the flora and fauna of the salt marsh, located just to the other side of the earthen berm to the south of this freshwater wetland.

Vernal pools all over the Cape like this one support the early life stages of amphibians such as the spotted salamander and wood frogs, as well as insects such as caddis flies and mosquitoes. After the first rains and warm nights, the amphibians will begin to lay their eggs and the insect larvae will begin twitching around the water of the pond. By late spring, the pond at dusk becomes a vibrant chorus of spring peeper calls laced through the songs of many insects and frogs.

After this freshwater wetland, the trail meanders uphill to afford fine views of the salt marsh to the left. The walker may flush waterfowl such as American Black Duck as he reaches the marsh. The path follows the marsh with lovely water vistas to the left and ahead. The salt marsh, which downstream is called The Run, has blue back herring in the open creeks. Then the path returns to the forest and the walker may choose the shorter or longer route back to the trailhead. One may encounter spotted turtles crossing Lieutenant Island Road to find sandy areas to lay their eggs.

Please stay on the trails to protect fragile plants in the area and to respect private properties.

Total Length of Trails: 0.9 miles

Extent: 8.7 acres

The trails pass over parcels owned by the Town of Wellfleet subject to a conservation restriction held by the Wellfleet Conservation Trust

Thanks to the Galdston family and the Frank family for their generous cooperation as landowners.

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