



SAVE THE LAND
SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY



WEANTINOGE
HERITAGE LAND TRUST

WEANTINOGE WALKS

A GUIDE TO HIKING TRAILS IN CONNECTICUT'S NORTHWEST CORNER

About Weantinog Heritage Land Trust

Founded in 1965 to benefit the public through the conservation of natural areas, fish and wildlife, and working farmland, Weantinog is the largest land trust in Connecticut and the eighteenth largest in the United States by the number of lands it conserves.

Over our 50 year history, Weantinog has permanently protected more than 10,000 acres in 17 communities throughout Northwest Connecticut. The organization's protected lands include designated wilderness areas, 15 working farms, streambelts, viewsheds, critical watershed lands, and 12 nature preserves open to the public with 18 miles of hiking trails.

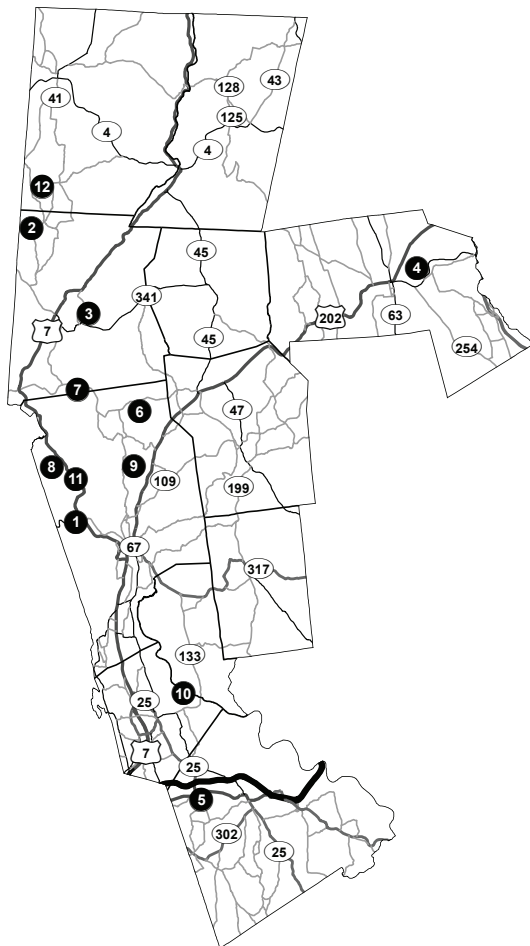
Weantinog prioritizes strategic regional acquisitions and science-based land preservation and management. Weantinog works with local communities and conservation partners to identify threatened and ecologically valuable properties for permanent protection and to promote strategic regional conservation goals that extend beyond town boundaries. Once acquired, Weantinog applies the highest stewardship standards and practices to ensure the lands' natural character is forever safeguarded. In addition to its conservation work, each year Weantinog provides free environmental education and outreach programs to more than 300 children and families.

About Our Trails

Our trails provide places for exploration, adventure, and solace. Weantinog welcomes volunteer assistance to help us maintain and protect our network. Please hike only on established trails as off-trail hiking can cause erosion and disturb rare plants, birds, and sensitive habitats. And, please always carry out what you bring in. Leave nothing behind but your footprints. We hope you enjoy hiking our trails!



As with a visit to any Weantinog preserve, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the Weantinog office at **(860) 927-1927** or email us at **info@weantinog.org**. Become a member today and support your local land, water, and wildlife conservation by visiting our website at **www.weantinog.org**

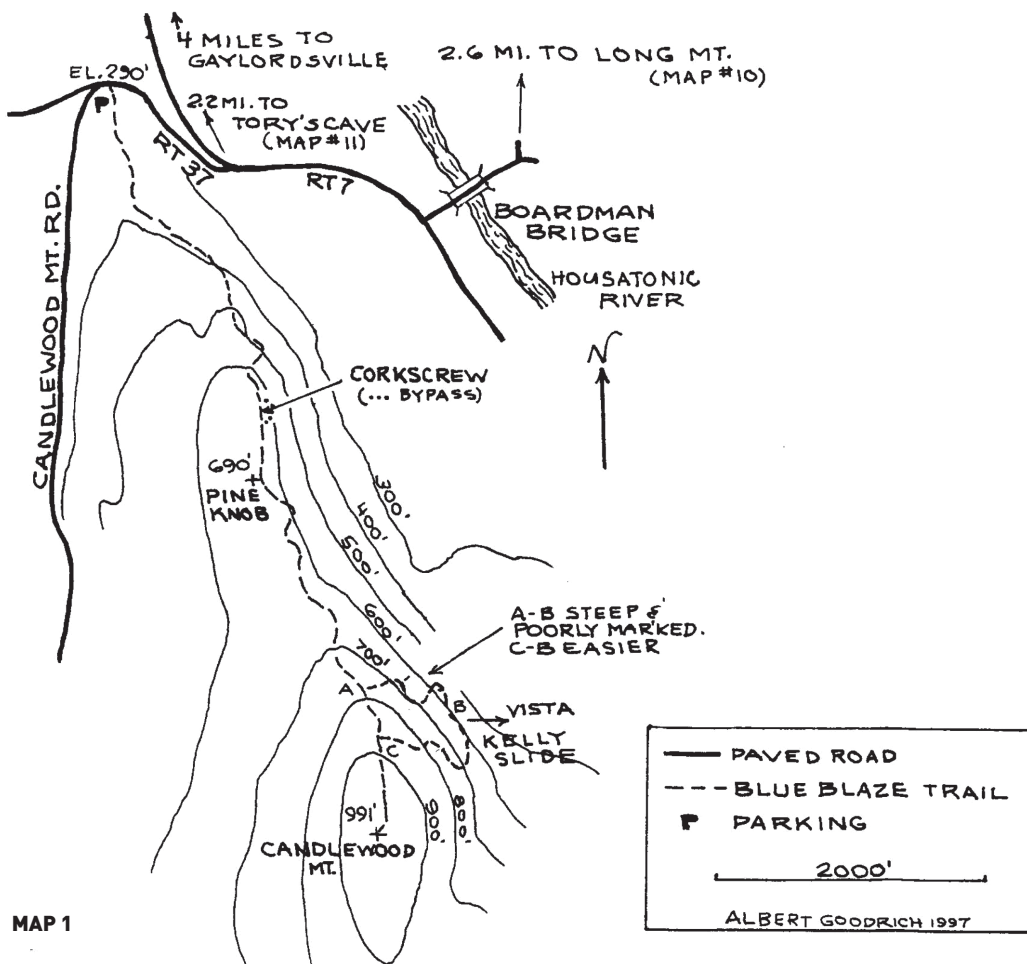


LOCATION MAP

WEANTINOGE PRESERVES WITH TRAILS

MAP LOCATION

- 1 Candlewood Mountain**
- 2 Cobble Mountain**
- 3 Cobble Brook Vista**
- 4 Hauser Nature Park**
- 5 Henry Preserve**
- 6 Kahn Preserve / Nostrand Preserve**
- 7 Alice McCallister Memorial Sanctuary**
- 8 Weantinoge's James Morrissey Family Nature Preserve
Naromi Land Trust's Strauss Preserve**
- 9 Mt. Tom**
- 10 Pratt Glen / Birch Rocks Nature Sanctuary**
- 11 Tory's Cave Preserve / Eleanor and Howard Hunt Preserve**
- 12 Wildwoods Nature Preserve**



MAP 1

Candlewood Mountain

NEW MILFORD 3.3 ACRES

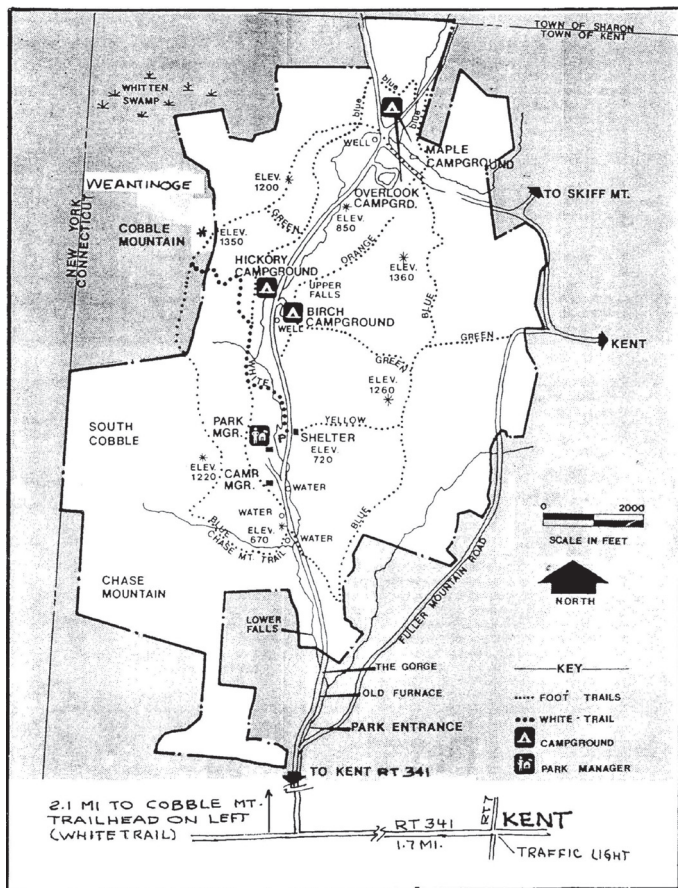
DO NOT HIKE WHEN WET OR ICY!!!

Hikers will have to use their hands on this trek, most notably at the giant pile of talus boulders known as the "corkscrew." The trail does actually spiral up through the mammoth heap.

Weantinoge owns only a small land-locked tract between Pine Knob and Candlewood Mt. All of the land along the official Blue-blazed Trail is private but not apt to be developed soon because of steepness.

This trail is part of the Housatonic Range Trail.

If you see a problem, report it to Weantinoge (860) 927-1927 or info@weantinoge.org



Cobble Mountain

KENT 20 ACRES

MACEDONIA BROOK STATE PARK, KENT 2,300 ACRES

Moderate hike. Steep near Blue Trail. Round trip parking to summit about 2 1/2 miles. The trail has both the steepest climb, 630 vertical feet, and the most dramatic vistas [Catskill Mountains 35 miles west and Taconic Range where NY, CT and MA meet] of any Weantinoge preserve. Weantinoge has worked very hard since 1982 to protect areas outside Macedonia State Park including tracts in NY.

Boots and a walking stick are highly recommended.

The trail is blazed white and intersects the blue. When you meet the blue turn right over fairly flat rocky areas, which can be very slippery when wet. The summit is marked by a plain benchmark.

For a problem on this trail call: Macedonia State Park Manager: (860) 927-3238.

Notes on Macedonia Brook State Park

Macedonia Brook became Connecticut's 13th state park as a result of a gift of 1,552 acres from the White Foundation of Litchfield in 1918. The park now has 2,300 acres. The peak of Cobble Mountain, located adjacent to the western park boundary, is used in triangulation by the Coast and Geodetic Survey. It is situated on a hard and uniform rock formation of Becket Gneiss, which has worn down slowly leaving a very exciting terrain. The Blue Trail crosses Cobble Mountain and several other peaks, offering outstanding views of the Catskills and Taconics. Numerous springs and streams are present in the area adding to the pleasure of a hike along the trail.

Some years after the park was formed the National Park Service offered to assist Connecticut in establishing one Civilian Conservation Corps Camp to employ otherwise unemployed people during the Depression. Macedonia Brook State Park was selected because of the large quantity of work, which was needed to be done in the park and immediate vicinity. The magnificent stone retaining wall for a road just west of but visible from Macedonia Brook Road is a product of those times. The camp was in existence from 1933 to 1935.

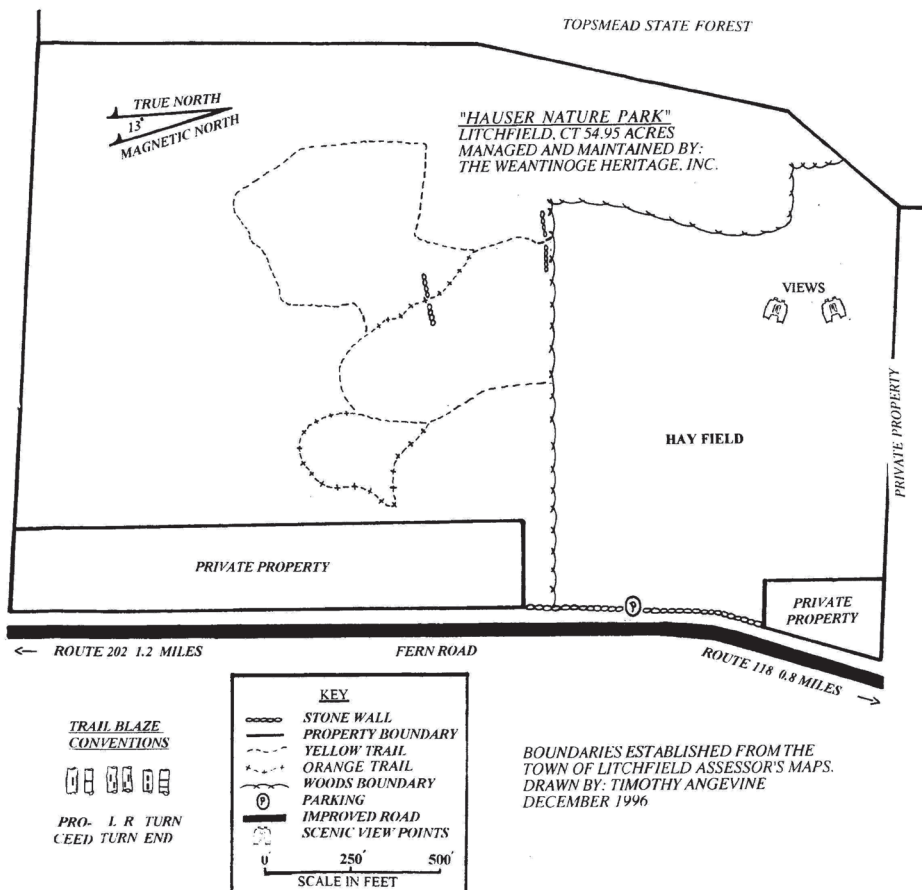
KENT 158 ACRES

This loop offers instant gratification as well as a longer exercise upon the steep wild flanks of the Cobble Brook Valley. The trailhead is by an old sandpit, which is being reclaimed by nature.

Ticks are abundant at times on the first part of the trail. They wait at the tops of vegetation, especially the taller grasses, for a "client" to brush by.

The recommended route, once reaching the loop junction, is clockwise as it is safer to climb the steeper route and descend the gentler way. Those reaching the top will be rewarded with a perch in the mountain laurel with views west, out across the Housatonic River.





Hauser Nature Park

LITCHFIELD 54.95 ACRES

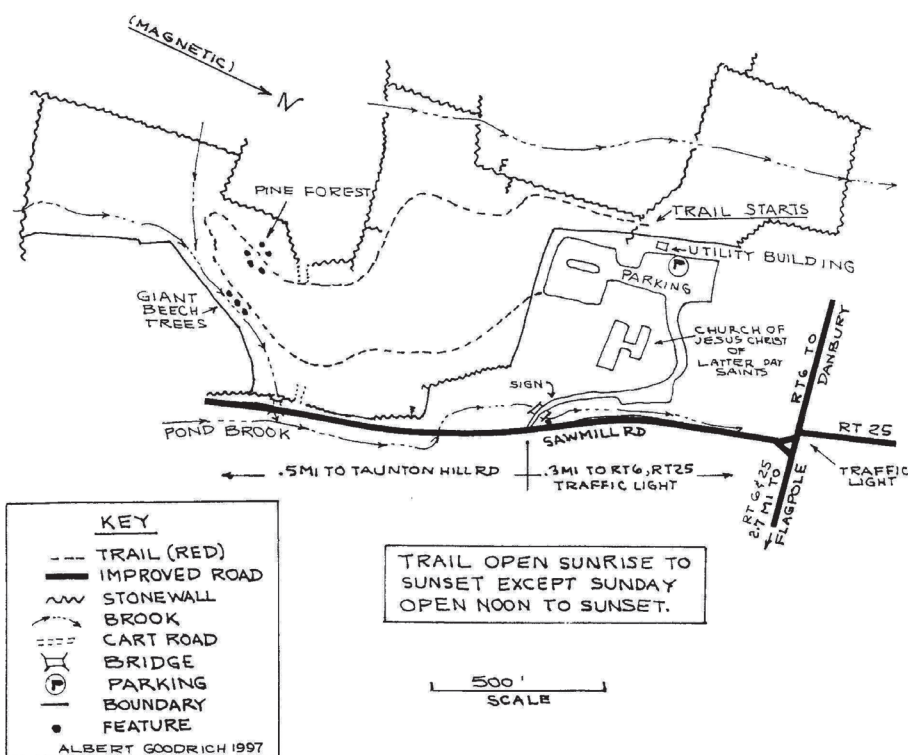
Easy walking. May be wet. Yellow Trail round trip from parking about 1 mile.

Hauser Nature Park was created in the mid-1970 s by Gustave and Rita Hauser and was a decisive step to preserve some of Litchfield's highest and most developable land. Much of the land is under a no-cost agricultural lease including a tract ¼ mile south of the mapped parcel (since grazing occurs there it is not open to the public). While the defining character of the park is a hayfield, there is even more woodland, especially with the addition of Mr. and Mrs. George Weston's gift of 36 acres at the northeast corner of the Hauser's gift.

Higher than Litchfield's village center, the hayfield looks out to the high points of the Litchfield Hills including Mohawk Mountain in Cornwall. By virtue of the poorly drained soils, the hayfield usually can't be cut until after mid-July. This has been a saving grace to one of Connecticut's last population of bobolinks, which are a declining species. Distinctive birds, dark below and patterned above, that require un-mowed meadows to breed before migrating to Argentina. In addition to the breeding grounds, the hayfield appears to be a major pre-migration staging area for bobolinks that are displaced by mowing from their attempted breeding grounds elsewhere in the area. Timothy and other seeds fatten them for their long journey. Bobolinks can be seen here from mid-May through July.

While it is satisfying to explore the hayfield, the woodland on the north offers the Ed Eveleth Memorial Trail, which loops through the headwaters of a brook with exposed stones reflecting the unique geology buried under most of Litchfield. Milky quartz appears here with the tease of potential gold deposits. This area is contiguous with Topsmead State Forest so wildlife thrives there.

To reach the Eveleth Trail walk along the left (north) side of the hayfield past the crest of the hill and watch for square yellow markers. An old trail created by the neighbors cuts north into the woods before the crest of the hill.



Henry Preserve

NEWTOWN 28 ACRES

Pleasant, easy walking on well worn trail.

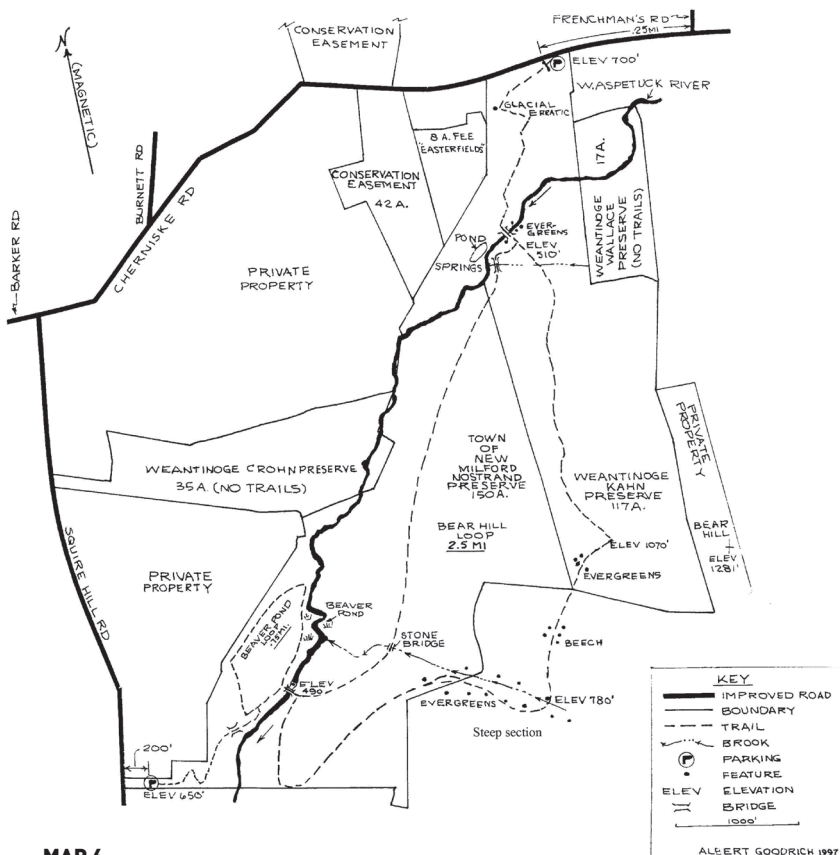
Elliott Henry, civil engineer, cared for this preserve for many decades before he trusted it with permanent preservation with Weantinog. He told of the land's previous owner, Ed Camp, who worked the land during the early 1900's. The Camp family bought the land directly from its first "owner" - the Fairchild estate, one of the first plots of land laid out in colonial Newtown. Seeing this thriving forest, it is hard to believe it had once been cleared and Camps grew corn here. Eventually, he gave up corn and started grazing sheep. Around 1910, dogs killed half the flock. This was the last straw for agriculture here. And the parcel reverted to forest.

Today the forest has many beautiful features. Tall tulip poplars and beech predate 1900. Inside the preserve is a major tributary of Pond Brook that drains the Great Hill area of Newtown. Before heavy development of the area, the stream supported brook trout. But, as homes were built, runoff increased, causing lower flow during dry spells, and the stream's creatures became vulnerable to raccoons. In the northern section are oak stumps five feet in diameter.

It is ironic that the very raccoons that decimated the fish flourished because of Henry's love of all animals. About once a week he would drive to a bakery in Waterbury and buy bags (trash size) of stale bread, and every night put out food for the animals. Keeping the backlights on and building a picture window to watch them, he would have pilgrimages of 30-40 raccoons, skunk, opossum, deer and red and grey foxes to watch every night.

He didn't want to see it all cut down. Hence, his outright gift to Weantinog in May 1989. About this time he donated the land for the church and moved to Indiana, PA. His house adjacent to the forest was torn down to be replaced with three others.

The forest is home to over 15 neotropical migrant birds that depend on an unbroken forest canopy to help their nests survive. Keep your dog on a leash at all times so as not to disturb birds like water thrushes, oven birds and grouse, which nest on the ground.



Kahn Preserve

NEW MILFORD 117 ACRES

Nostrand Preserve

NEW MILFORD 150 ACRES

Trails connect the two contiguous preserves.

Round trip from Cherniske Road and around the Bear Hill Loop is 3 1/4 miles.

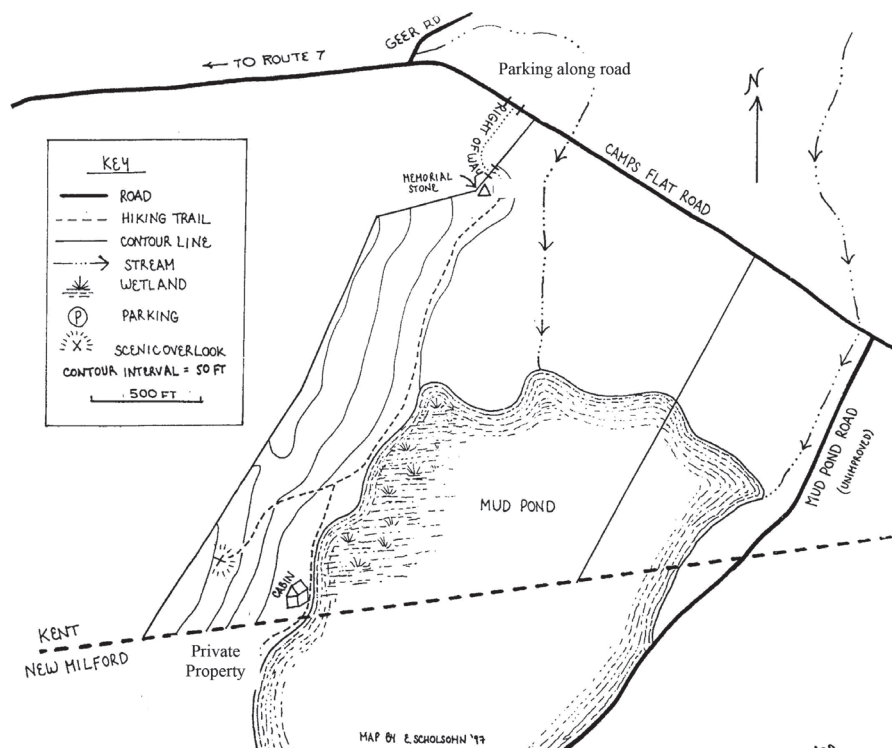
The Kahn Preserve was a gift to Weantinoge in memory of Leon and Yareth Kahn in 1994.

The Nostrand Preserve was purchased by the Town of New Milford with a grant from the Iroquois Gas Transmission System, Inc.

Even though the Kahn Preserve was logged in the early 1990's (before Weantinoge owned it), its red pine plantation has died, and non-native invasive shrubs are attempting to takeover, this Preserve offers a wonderful experience in the West Aspetuck River Valley. The River itself is exceptionally clean, protected by the abundant forests and wetlands upstream. Mink and otter breed here. Though the marked trail system does not follow the river closely, if one turns right just before the rail bridge after descending from Cherniske Road, a bushwhack reveals a pond where amphibians breed and wood and black ducks can be observed. Along the base of the slope here, springs emerge with such volume that sand can be seen boiling-up from the pools where they begin. Watercress was established decades ago in one of these spring-fed brooklets. Further down, a level area in the floodplain has an example of a riparian gallery forest – tall, fast growing trees including some of the regions only forest-grown (as opposed to open-grown) swamp white oak.

The trails of Bear Hill pass by two sections of mature forest. The high portions of the trail offer seasonal (when leaves are down) views northwest towards Kent and west into New York.

The trails are maintained by the New Milford Youth Agency and Weantinoge.



Alice McCallister Memorial Sanctuary

KENT 64 ACRES

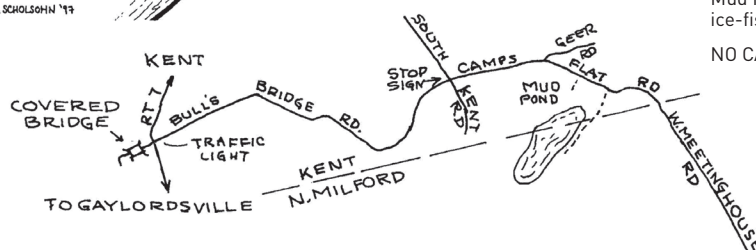
Easy walking. Parking to overlook ~ 1 mile.

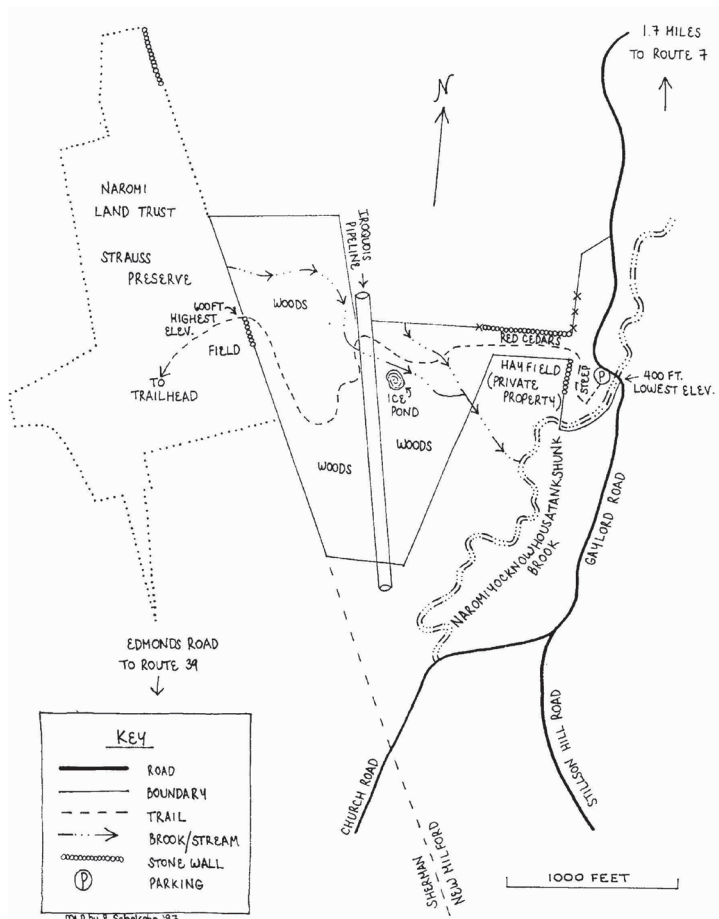
As early as the mid-1970's, Weantinoge's founding president, Alice McCallister, identified Mud Pond as a protection priority. Between 1991 and 1995 several people worked hard to purchase the tract which had been designed as an 8-lot subdivision. Its purchase was made possible with funds from many private contributors, a generous gift from the Ellen Knowles Harcourt Fund, and funds from the Iroquois Gas Transmission System Land Preservation and Enhancement Program.

Despite its name, Mud Pond is a jewel set between a quartzite ridge on the west and Tory Mountain to the east. There are several types of calcareous (calcium-rich or limy) wetlands along the pond and well-drained acidic soils on the quartzite ridge. The sanctuary has an amazing diversity of bird species and plant species including Connecticut's largest black ash trees. It will take years to find most of the species...some rare.

Mud Pond is used by fishermen (including ice-fishing) and for canoeing.

NO CAMPING OR VEHICLES PERMITTED





Weantinoge's James Morrissey Family Nature Preserve

NEW MILFORD 59 ACRES

Naromi Land Trust's Strauss Preserve

SHERMAN 34 ACRES

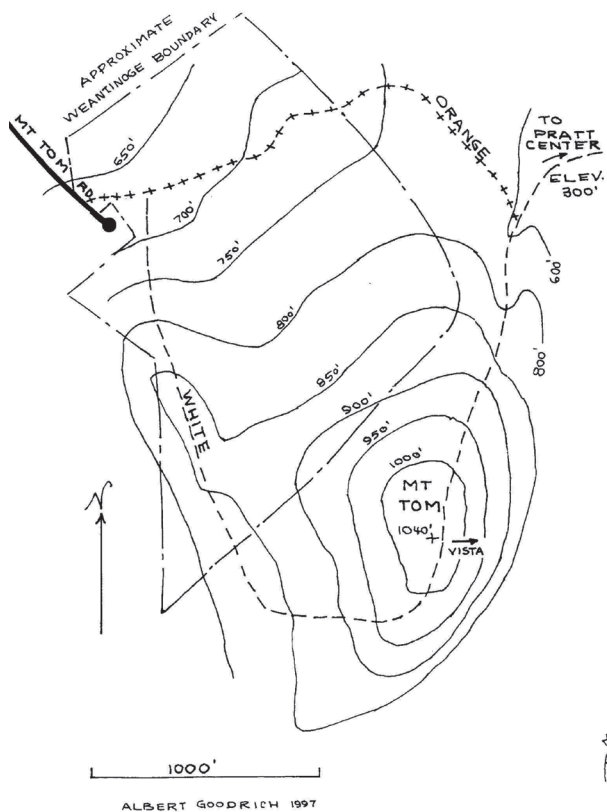
Steep near Gaylord Rd., otherwise easy to moderate. Roundtrip to stonewall about 1 mile.

Roundtrip from Morrissey Preserve trailhead to Naromi Land Trust's Strauss Preserve trailhead about 1.6 miles.

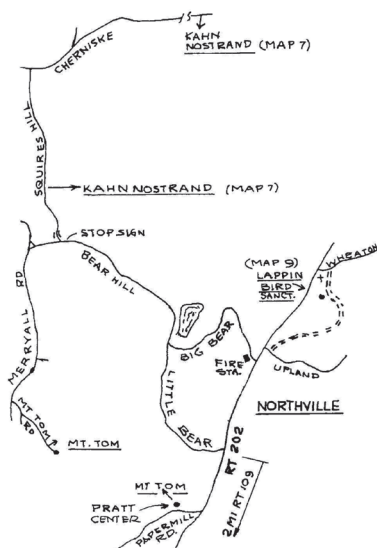
Despite the unusual shape of this Preserve, it contains varied landscapes and species as well as a trail that quickly puts the hustle and bustle of the Route 7 corridor out of mind. Even before parking, one admires the cliffs along Gaylord Road. The trail climbs steeply to a young woodland studded with red cedars before crossing a small brook. The trail then curls around a gentle knoll to the clearing for the Iroquois Gas Pipeline, which was built through the pristine area in 1991 under intense oversight of conservation groups. After crossing the pipeline, one may note the complexity of the brook, which is fed by underground channels in the marble bedrock; one channel ends in a perfect cylinder. The marble lends richness to the forest with plants like showy orchids, wild oats, and an endangered sedge. The trail continues its climb through an area rich in butternut trees before reaching towering tulip poplars. At the town line, the trail connects with Naromi Land Trust's Strauss Preserve with its meadows studded with varied conifers. The trailhead for the Strauss Preserve is located at the northern end of Edmonds Road.

Working together, Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust and Naromi Land Trust continue to offer year-round recreational and educational opportunities.

As with a visit to any Weantinoge preserve, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the Weantinoge office at (860) 927-1927 or email us at info@weantinoge.org. Become a member today and support your local land, water, and wildlife conservation by visiting our website at www.weantinoge.org. Contact Naromi Land Trust at (860) 354-0260 and visit www.naromi.org for more information.



ALBERT GOODRICH 1997



Mt. Tom

NEW MILFORD 50 ACRES

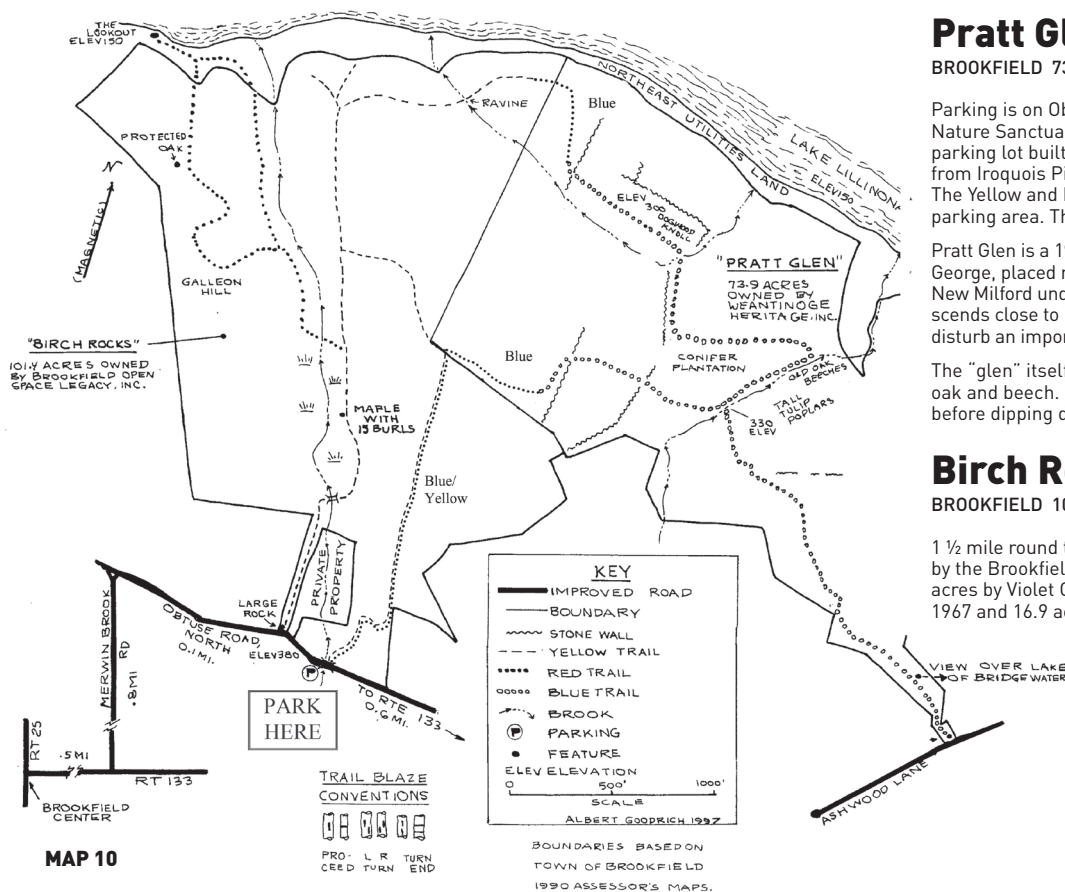
Easy walking. 1 1/4 miles round trip from Mt. Tom Road.

For 25 years the Pratt Center has maintained a trail system to Mt. Tom. During the late 1980's Weantinoge and the New Milford Youth Agency created a trail to the Center starting from the top of a subdivision road, which climbs well up the west side of Mt. Tom. Weantinoge has acquired three major tracts of land to buffer the Pratt Center and Mt. Tom. En-route one may see vernal pools and lofty tulip poplars.

The trailhead to Mt. Tom is located near the end of Mt. Tom Road, which is off Merryall Road south of Weantinoge's Smyrski Farm Preserve. Parking is just uphill from 31 Mt. Tom Road, New Milford.

The location map below shows the relationship of the Pratt Center and Weantinoge's western Mt. Tom trailhead, Kahn/Nostrand preserve, and Lappin Bird Sanctuary to Route 202.

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Pratt Glen

BROOKFIELD 73.9 ACRES

Parking is on Obtuse Road North and is shared with Birch Rocks Nature Sanctuary. Access Pratt Glen and Birch Rocks trails from this parking lot built with lots of in-kind services and a \$15,000 grant from Iroquois Pipeline Operating Co. No parking on Ashwood Lane. The Yellow and Blue trails make a nice "lollipop" loop from the parking area. There is a trail map and kiosk at the trailhead.

Pratt Glen is a 1990 gift of the late Jane Pratt, who with her husband George, placed many farms and natural areas in Bridgewater and New Milford under permanent protection. While the well-built trail descends close to Lake Lillinonah, the trail does not come so close as to disturb an important foraging area for otter, mink, eagles and osprey.

The "glen" itself is a steep ravine with very tall mature tulip poplar, oak and beech. One will pass a spruce and white pine plantation before dipping down across a seasonal brook to a gentle knoll.

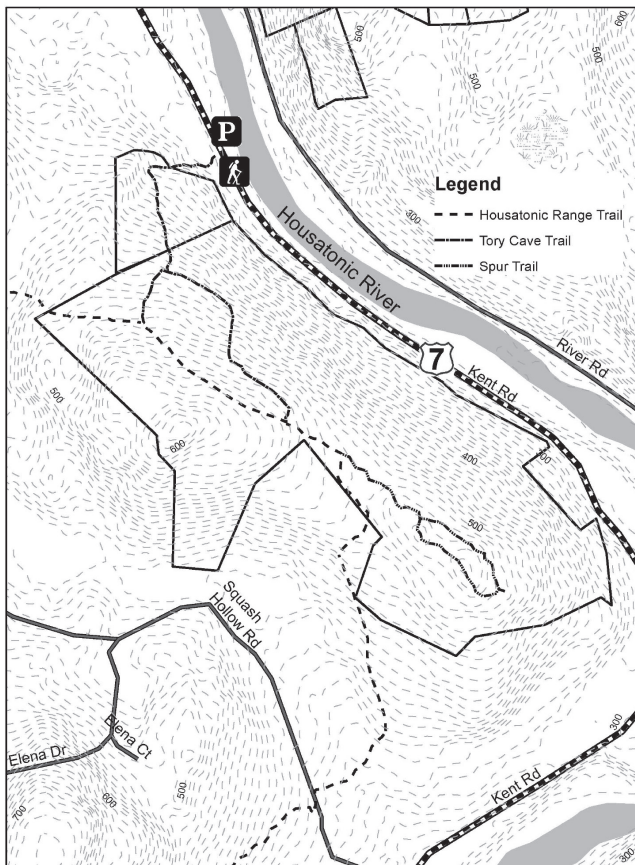
Birch Rocks Nature Sanctuary

BROOKFIELD 101.4 ACRES

1 1/2 mile round trip yellow trail to ravine. Owned and maintained by the Brookfield Open Space Legacy, Inc., this was the gift of 11.3 acres by Violet C. Watson in 1966, 74 acres by George D. Pratt, Jr. in 1967 and 16.9 acres by H. C. and Joanna Beall Westermann in 1977.

This property is beautifully graced with two brooks, a large 70-year-old grove of hemlocks, many groves of beech, yellow and black birch and other hardwoods. The yellow trail leading northeast toward Lake Lillinonah is sloping, fairly open and easily walked. It is about 1/2 mile to the lake. The ravine is quite spectacular.

Brookfield Open Space Legacy: contact@bosli.org.



Tory's Cave Preserve

8 ACRES

Eleanor and Howard Hunt Preserve

107 ACRES

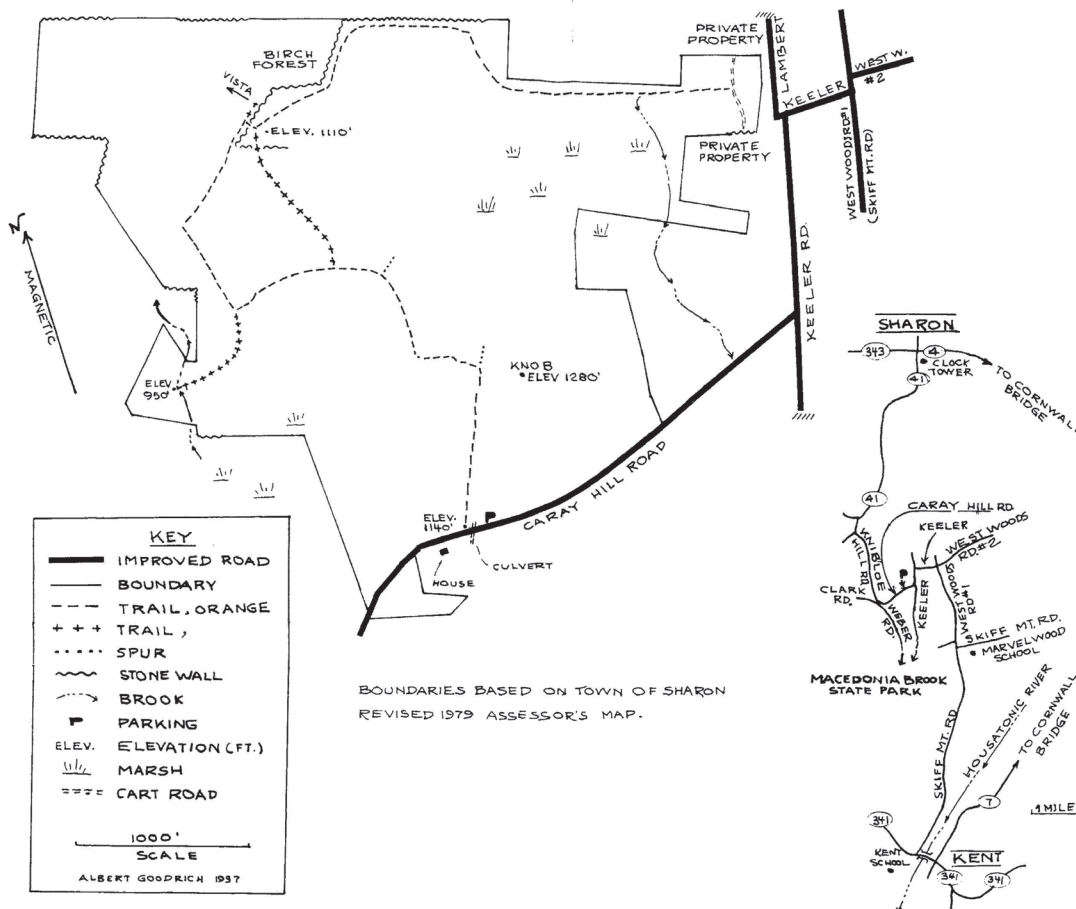
Tory's Cave is named after British loyalists who were rumored to have taken refuge there during the Revolutionary War. However, given that the cave is cool year-round, often freezes shut in winter, and water constantly drips from the ceiling, it is doubtful that the rumor is more than just that.

The cave is a dissolutional marble cave, formed over millennia by water and naturally occurring carbonic acid dissolving the surrounding limestone. Typical of these types of caves, the entrance is a sinkhole. The cave is an artifact of the last glacier, which melted away about 10,000 years ago.

Today, the cave is closed to protect hibernating bats, whose populations across eastern North America have been decimated by White Nose Syndrome. An estimate 6 million bats—and counting—have died from the fungus, which disrupts their hibernation, causing bats to awaken early, deplete vital fat stores, and hunt for insects in the dead of winter.

Tory's Cave and the Eleanor and Howard Hunt Preserve offer several miles of great hiking and access to the Housatonic Range Blue Trail system. Brian and Mark Hunt, sons of Eleanor and Howard, donated the Preserve in 2016 in memory of their parents and who owned the land that is now the preserve for over 50 years. The Preserve was formally open in 2017, and the kiosk and stair were built by the New Milford Youth Agency.

In the late 19th century, the land that is now the Hunt Nature Preserve was owned by the Kent Iron Company which operated from 1826 to 1892. The remains of a blast furnace owned by Kent Iron are located on what is now the grounds of the Sloane Stanley Museum in Kent, Connecticut. Iron from the Litchfield Hills was used to make cannons during the Civil War as well as to supply 19th century locomotive and steam engine manufacturers in New York, Rhode Island, and New Jersey. The Hunt Preserve land was used to produce charcoal for ironmaking. Many of the hills of northwest Connecticut were stripped of their trees as charcoal was produced on site to feed the iron industry. Remnants of 19th century charcoal mounds can be found on the Hunt Preserve; they appear as shallow circular areas, and some have low stone foundations. There are several adjacent to the trails.



Wildwoods Nature Preserve

SHARON 163 ACRES

Easy to moderate walking.
Orange trail 2 1/2 miles round trip.

Wildwoods Sanctuary was a gift to Weantinoge in 1981 by Paul Porzelt, Constance Morris, Charles D. Brooks, George Vila, and Valerie Delacorte.

It has many unusual values including magnificent seasonal views. It is our best stand of northern hardwoods and has a plentiful food supply for wildlife.

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