Vivian N. Wies gave the Land Trust her beloved “Meadow Island,” an 11 acre gem of upland and salt marsh, in 1998. The trail which runs around the perimeter of the island is easy going and offers one of the most intimate walking experiences in Branford.

The property is an oval “island” in a tidal wetland. Access from the road is over a grass covered berm lined by a freshwater wetland where skunk cabbage sprouts in the spring. Phragmites, winterberry and cedar also line this access path. On the island itself, the flora changes dramatically in response to the dry, rocky soil, consisting mainly of oaks, pitch pine, mountain laurel, blueberry and shadbush. The shadbush, also known as Juneberry, offers a special treat when its white flowers briefly appear in late April. These two common names are fitting, since the flowers bloom when the shad are running in the rivers and the berries appear in June. Vivian Wies especially treasured this land for its profusion of flowering lady slippers in mid-May, but their numbers are now declining for unknown reasons. These plants should not be disturbed in any way. A series of exposed granite ledges that overlook wetlands, the narrow Pine Creek and distant upland areas that adjoin Pleasant Point Road are found on the island’s west side.

On the southern tip of the island, a spur trail takes you to the edge of the salt marsh. Near some old dock pilings are mudbanks that are covered with fiddler crabs during the warm months. If you approach too loudly, they’ll all scurry down into their holes. All year, masses of mussels can be seen along the river banks. Osprey, turkey vultures, belted kingfisher, herons, egrets, mallard and deer all frequent the area in and around this small and secluded haven.

For more information about this location, contact:
Branford Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 254, Branford, CT 06405
(203) 483-5263
www.branfordlandtrust.org

Questions regarding this brochure can be addressed to South Central Regional Council of Governments
Phone: (203) 234-7555/Fax: (203) 234-9850
E-mail: trails@scrcog.org

Scan QR Code to access the South Central Regional Council of Governments Recreational Trails Webpage
The Wies Preserve

Photo by Peter Marteka of the Hartford Courant

Trail Description:

Easy Hike
The Wies Preserve has a short walk around a beautiful preserve. There are many opportunities to see different types of flora and fauna. The short hike also gives views of the completely surrounding salt marshes on every side of this property except the route leading in. From the “Meadow island” there will be several chances to view many different species of wildlife that inhabit the area.

Total trails distance is approx. 0.30 miles

Legend

- Parking
- Trailhead
- Red (Red Trail)
- Land Trust Property
- Wetlands

Trail Data and Content was provided by The Branford Land Trust. The Trail Map and Brochure was prepared by SCRCOG (2016).