

Beacon Hill Preserve

Beacon Hill is a 100-foot high traprock ridge overlooking the Farm River marshes. The southern tip of the ridge was quarried between 1894 and 1914, leaving a steep cliff with a hollowed-out low area at the base. The property is skirted on the south by the tracks of the Shoreline Trolley Museum (Branford Electric Railway Museum), which has its base in East Haven. When the trolleys are running, for a small fee, you can take a refurbished antique trolley across the marshes and be let off at the foot of the hill. The public portion of the ridge is 60 acres.

The campaign to save Beacon Hill spanned eight years. Neighbors, with the support of Branford Land Trust, fought off three development proposals. The state eventually agreed to buy Beacon Hill for preservation but provided only half the funding, so the land trust mounted an unprecedented, and successful, fund-raising campaign, with the Town contributing \$800,000. The final challenge was a referendum called on the town funding; this was defeated and the town funding was approved by the voters. Beacon Hill is now owned by the State of Connecticut but managed by the Town of Branford.

From early April through May, the Beacon Hill Preserve produces a dazzling succession of wildflowers, in an abundance found in few other spots in Branford. Dutchman's breeches, wild leek, bloodroot, trout lily, columbine, wood anemone, blue cohosh, jack-in-the-pulpit, and cranesbill are the more prevalent species. At any time of the year, Beacon Hill is worth visiting for its spectacular views of Long Island Sound and the Farm River marshes.



Photo by Branford Land Trust

Easy to Moderate Hike

This small trail system on State land is suitable for all seeking a short hike to get views of Long Island Sound and the marshes that surround the area of the Farm River. While the main trails lie on State land there is also access to the Branford Trail that connects to several other trail complexes via a 28 mile town wide loop. **Please note: The trail follows an active railroad so use caution.**

Total trails distance is approx. 1.08 miles

Directions and Parking:

Follow Route 1 toward East Haven and go left on Pent Road. Park on the left at the hairpin curve, or at the end of Dominican Road, which goes south from Route 1 just before the East Haven town line.

Permitted/Prohibited Activities:

Properties are open during daylight hours plus one hour before and after. Stay on the trails and please carry out everything you carry in. Hunting or the use of BB guns and air rifles is prohibited. No open fires or camping. Motorized vehicles are strictly prohibited and violators will be prosecuted. Follow the classic counsel to leave a place or trail better than you found it.



Photo by Branford Land Trust

Total Trails Length: approx. 1.08 miles

Red Trail: 0.46 miles

The Branford Trail: 0.72 miles

The Branford Trail Connector: 0.55 miles



For more information about this walk contact:

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