

Hoadley Creek Preserve

The 111-acre Hoadley Creek Preserve came into being through three acquisitions. The first was in 1996, when the Branford Land Trust and Guilford Land Conservation Trust were approached by members of the Pinchot Family, descendants of early 20th-century conservationist Gifford Pinchot, about buying their 47-acre parcel, which straddled the town line. Pinchot was the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service and founder of the Yale School of Forestry in 1900. The two land trusts jumped at the chance to protect the property, not only for its scenic value, but also to protect the upper reaches of Hoadley Creek. The two groups raised the money to buy the parcel and now own and manage the property jointly. A few years later, the preserve was expanded through the purchase of a 47-acre property from Jay Medlyn, the third generation of a family that used the land for farming and dairy operations. In 2005, the Branford Land Trust bought a 17-acre parcel uniting the Medlyn property with the Stony Creek Quarry Preserve, thus accomplishing a long-term goal. A monument here dedicates this parcel to Lisa Santcroce, an ardent Branford environmental activist who inspired many fellow Branford Land Trust members before dying of cancer at the age of 39.

Remarkable and delightful natural features abound on this preserve. On entering from Route 146, you can enjoy a close-up view of a pocket of salt marsh frequented in the warm months by snow-white egrets. A short distance beyond is a hidden pond, with its waters cascading over a stone dam; upstream, high cliffs cast their shadow over a rocky creek. Farther uphill, the property is bursting with huge glacial erratics - boulders dumped by the glacier that covered the region some 30,000 years ago. The sheer size of these granite behemoths caused the Yale Peabody Museum to write, "I know of no other area in New England where this concentration of boulders can be duplicated. The image of these giants scattered among slender trees is one not easily forgotten."



Photo by Emmeline Alaconis

Directions and Parking:

Follow Leetes Island Road (Route 146) toward Guilford. On Leetes Island Road, a parking lot will be on your left just before the train tracks. Alternatively, take a left on Quarry Road and park in the lot on your right just after the road becomes unpaved to access Stony Creek Preserve which connects to Hoadley Creek Preserve.

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

Easy to Moderate Hike

Walks of the Hoadley Creek Preserve are diverse, offering everything from a casual stroll to a more strenuous trek. Flowing brooks, wetlands, open fields, and ragged rock outcrops make for an exciting trip regardless of the trail selected.

Total Trails Length: approx. 3.20 miles

Red Trail: 1.11 miles

The Branford Trail: 1.49 miles

Unblazed Trails: 0.60 miles



For more information about this walk contact:

Branford Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 254, Branford, CT 06405
(203) 393-2100 ext:127

