

Paumanok Path: Wading River-Manor Rd. to Schultz Rd.

5.2 miles out and back—white blazes

Why:

The Peconic River passes through Manorville, and so does the Paumanok Path hiking trail. Taking a round-trip walk of under six miles here will reveal much to you about the Pine Barrens.

Directions:

From Exit 70 of the L.I.E, go north past the Trails Information Center to a T-intersection. Turn right, cross the LIRR tracks, and turn right again at the next T-intersection. Shortly after, bear left onto David Terry Road/Wading River Manor Road. In about half a mile, you'll reach a small bridge over the Peconic River and a sign marking the border of Riverhead and Southampton towns. Park here and look for the white-blazed trail on the west side, just north of the river.

Description:

At first, you'll walk a narrow corridor between the Peconic and private property, but after crossing a small footbridge you'll find yourself in an expanse of Pine Barrens with an interesting recent history. Notice that the trail is shady and lined with typical vegetation: sweet pepperbush near water, then pitch pines, oaks and berry bushes in the drier areas.

Not far down the trail, however, the canopy thins out and the understory growth increases. You've reached the edge of what was a moderately hot brush fire back in 1993. Notice that the fire-adapted pines, berry bushes and heath plants still thrive here, but the tree oaks are only now returning. After the fire, thick scrub oak, fire sedge and grasses dominated the area. Though they remain today, they are slowly receding as the canopy thickens once more.

Before reaching your turn-around point at Schultz Road, you'll pass an old kettlehole pond, which has slowly and naturally filled in over the years but still harbors ferns in the lower areas. If you're lucky, you'll spot beautiful eastern bluebirds, which love to nest in old burn areas, and perhaps wild turkeys.

Observing subtle changes in the always-resilient Pine Barrens is part of the fascination of walking our open spaces.

Options:

Continuing west across Schultz Road will bring you to Jones Pond, on your left, in another 0.2 mile; Sandy and Grassy Ponds lie another 1.0 mile beyond Jones.

***Happy Hiking
from the
Long Island Pine
Barrens Society!***



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SOCIETY

Long Island Pine Barrens Society
547 E. Main St. Riverhead, NY 11901
(631)369-3300
www.pinebarrens.org
info@pinebarrens.org

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KEY

- Main Trail
- - Side Trails
- ⋯ Boardwalks
- ▨ Wetlands

