

Long Island Pine Barrens Parks Passport

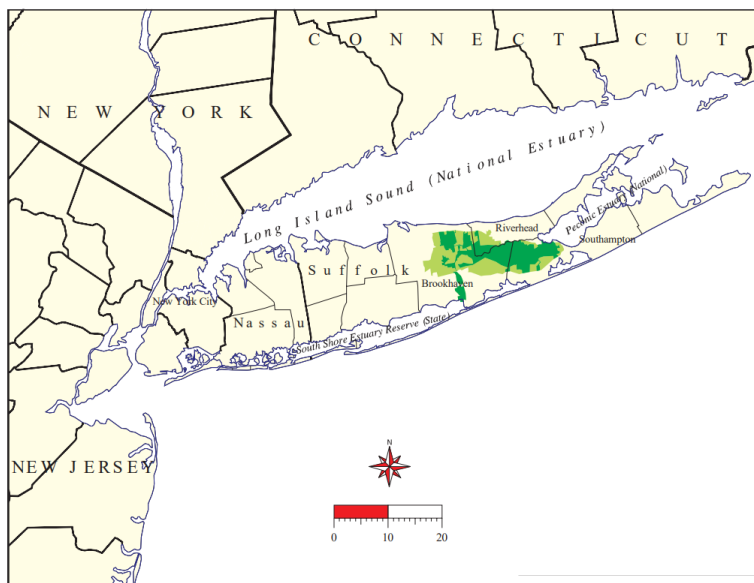


Hiker Name: _____

**Provided by the:
Long Island Pine Barrens Society**

What is the Long Island Pine Barrens?

The Long Island Pine Barrens is a large section of preserved land on Long Island. The Central Pine Barrens Preserve totals 106,000 acres. How big is that? Well, a regulation football field is 1.32 acres, so the Pine Barrens is larger than 80,300 football fields! Half of that land is placed in a "Core Preservation Area," where no new development is allowed (**dark green** in the image below). The other half is placed in a "Compatible Growth Area" where some development is allowed, but only under strict environmental guidelines (**light green** below).



Credit: NYS Pine Barrens Commission

The Pine Barrens is also home to thousands of plant and animal species, many of which are endangered or threatened.



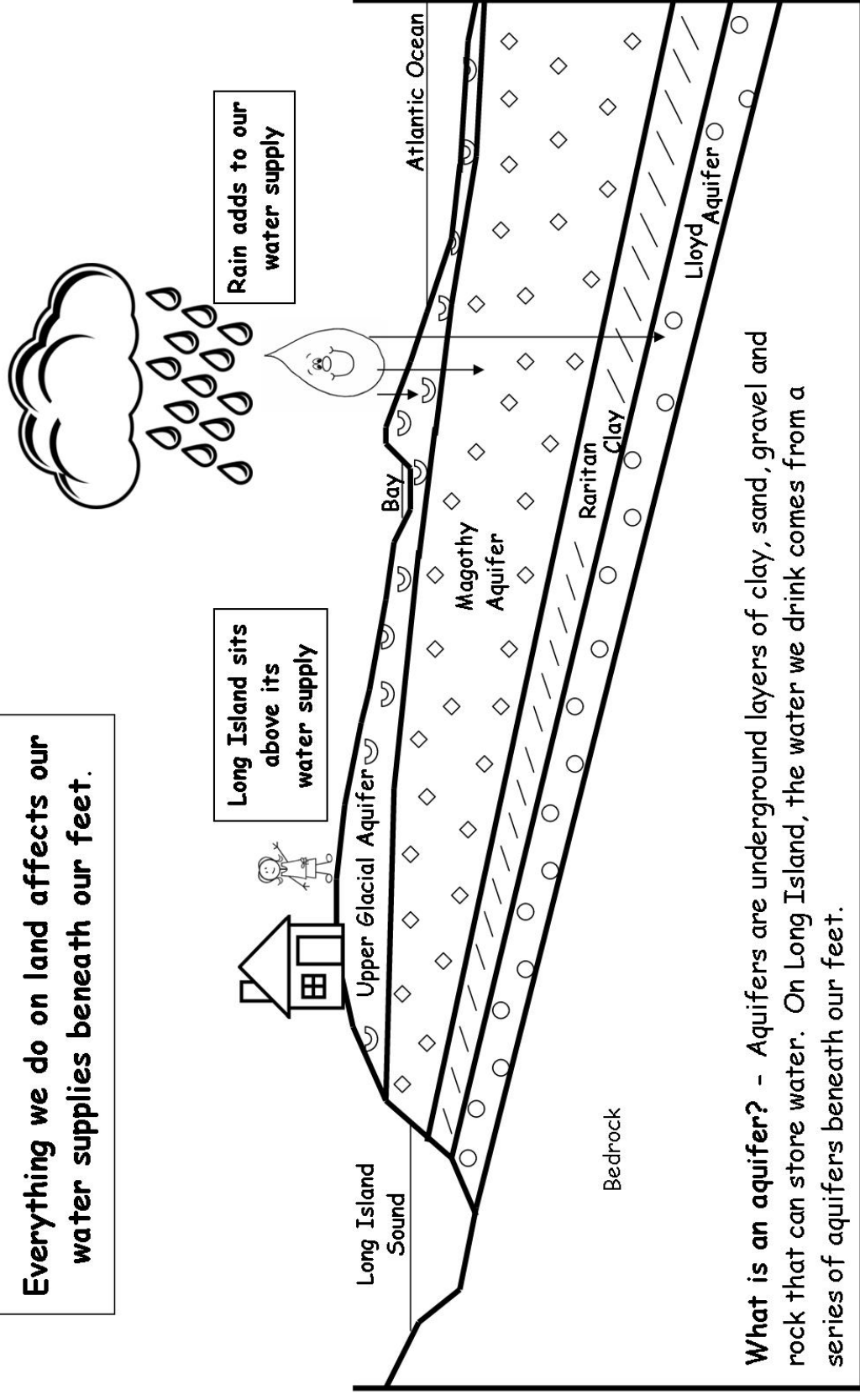
The Pine Barrens Protect Our Water Quality

The Pine Barrens overlie and protect Long Island's drinking water. All of the Island's drinking water comes from a series of aquifers. Aquifers are underground layers of clay, sand, gravel and rock that can store water. They are recharged by rainfall. We drill down below the land's surface to draw up water to use in our homes. Everything we do on land has the potential to impact our water quality - everything we pour down our drains, flush down the toilet or put on our lawns, will eventually make its way into our drinking water. We must all take special care to protect our water supply!

The more land we use for homes, lawns, roads, and businesses, the greater the risk of contaminating our aquifers. The Pine Barrens , and other pockets of open space, serve as important recharge areas - allowing pure rain to recharge our aquifers, untouched by pollution.



Everything we do on land affects our water supplies beneath our feet.



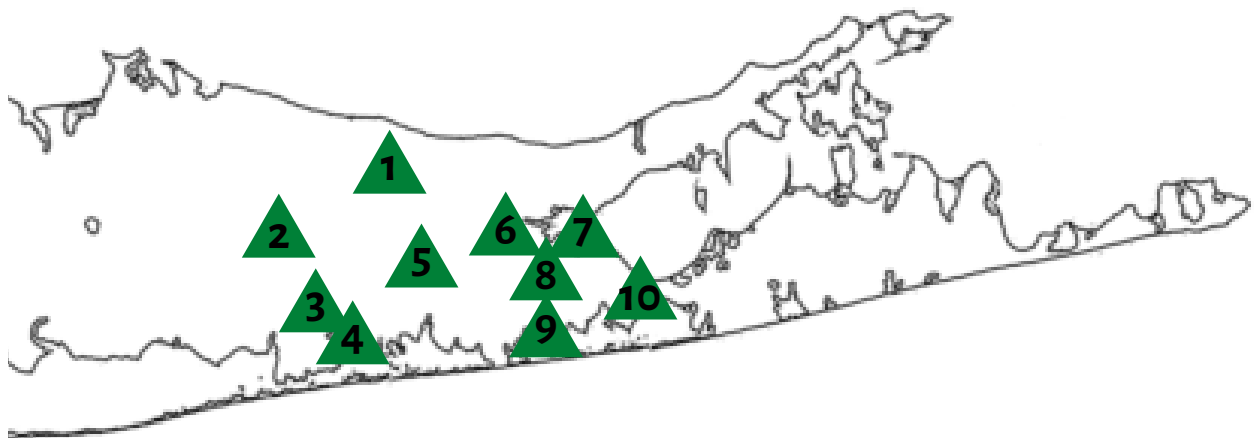
What is an aquifer? - Aquifers are underground layers of clay, sand, gravel and rock that can store water. On Long Island, the water we drink comes from a series of aquifers beneath our feet.

This Land Is Our Land!

The Long Island Pine Barrens is also a place that we can all visit and enjoy! There are opportunities to hike, bike, swim, fish, boat, learn and more!

Become a Pine Barrens Expert by visiting each of the parks in this passport and learning about this unique ecosystem along the way. Fill out each page for each park, to complete your mission.

- ☐ 1. Brookhaven State Park
- ☐ 2. Prosser Pines Nature Preserve
- ☐ 3. Southaven County Park
- ☐ 4. Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge
- ☐ 5. El's Wampmissick Trail
- ☐ 6. Cranberry Bog Nature Preserve
- ☐ 7. Indian Island County Park
- ☐ 8. Dwarf Pine Plains
- ☐ 9. Quogue Wildlife Refuge
- ☐ 10. Sears-Bellows County Park



Hiking 101

Start small. Extend your distance as you begin to feel more comfortable.



Check the weather forecast and radar before heading out.



Bring water with you to stay hydrated.



Wear comfortable footwear. Closed toe shoes and high socks pulled up over your pants provide you with the best tick protection.



Watch your footing. Watch for roots or critters along your path.



Bring a trail map and be mindful of trail markings. Always stay on the trail!



Always check yourself for ticks after your hike.



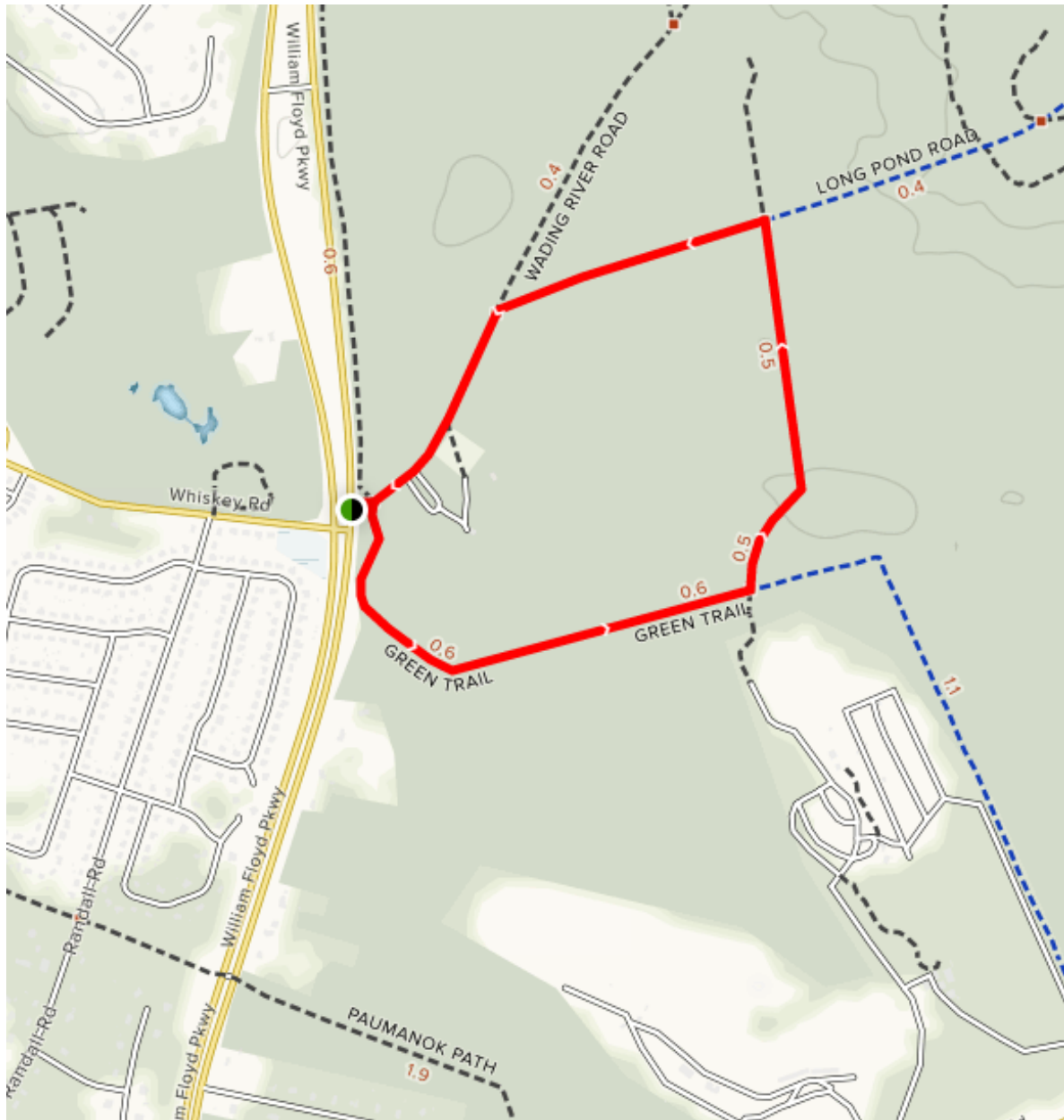
Leave no trace. If you bring something into the park, bring it out with you. Leave what you find.



#1 Brookhaven State Park

2500 William Floyd Pkwy, Ridge, NY 11961

1.8 Mile Loop Blue Trail, with other trail options for longer hikes



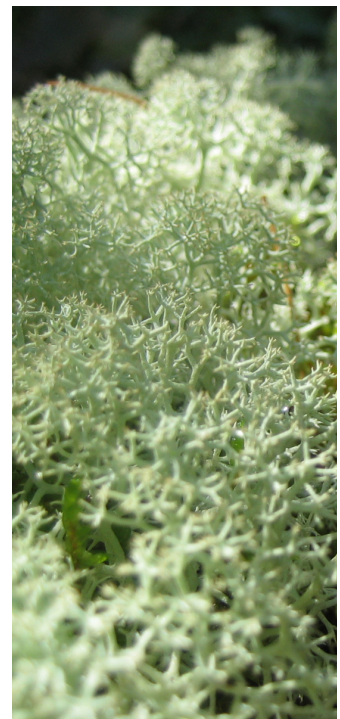
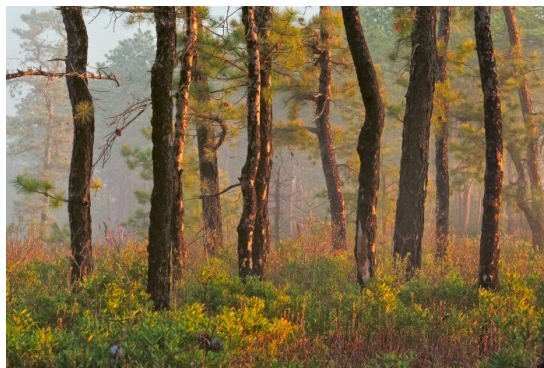


Take in the Trail - Brookhaven

How would you describe the forest? What do you see?

Forests are usually described by the types of plants that grow there. There are trees that are tall and make up the "canopy" of a forest. Then, there are plants that are shorter and fall below the canopy, called the "understory." There is also another category of plants that lie along the forest floor.

In the Pine Barrens, you usually have Pitch Pine trees and a variety of oaks in the canopy (with a few other tree species mixed in). In the understory, you may see shorter oaks called "Scrub Oaks" and a variety of heath plants, like blueberry, huckleberry, bearberry, wintergreen and more. Along the forest floor, there can be wildflowers, mosses, lichens, ferns, and grasses. There are also wetland communities of plants, around lakes, ponds, streams, and creeks.



Do you see the different layers of plants along your walk?



#1 Brookhaven State Park

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

#2 Prosser Pines Nature Preserve

67 Yaphank Middle Island Rd, Middle Island, NY 11953

0.7 mile loop





Take in the Trail - Prosser Pines

Does this park look different than the other parks you've visited? Do you see any oak trees?

Prosser Pines Nature Preserve mostly consists of towering White Pines because it used to be a White Pine plantation or farm. The White Pines that are connected to the image of the preserve originate from seedlings brought back from Quebec during the French and Indian War in 1759. While this British Officer, Jonathan Edwards, started to plant these seedlings on the site that would become Prosser Pines, it was not until 1812 that the property truly became the famed White Pine plantation that is known today. In that year, William Dayton began to grow more White Pine trees and soon opened a 240 acre farm. By 1889, the site was sold to Thomas Prosser, whose family owned the land until 1967, when the nature preserve was finally created.

True Pine Barrens forests are usually dominated by Pitch Pines, which look quite different than White Pines in Prosser Pines. You can tell the difference for sure by looking at the needles. The Pitch Pines' needles come in bundles of three. White Pine needles come in bundles of five.



**Pitch
Pine**



**White
Pine**

**Make sure to visit
the Tree Fort!**



#2 Prosser Pines Nature Preserve

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

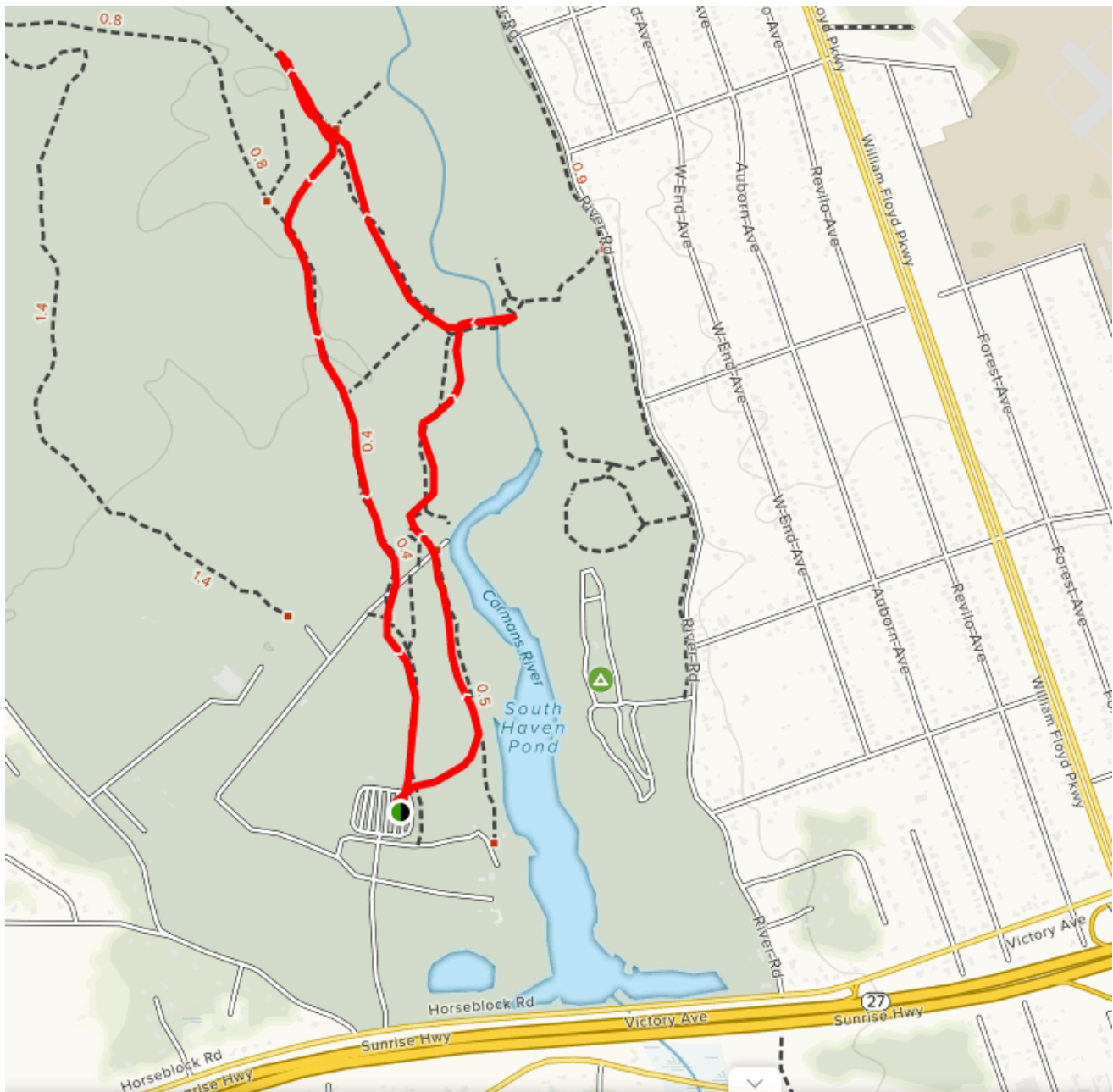
I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

#3 Southaven County Park

175 Gerard Rd, Yaphank, NY 11980

2.8 mile loop, with trail options for shorter or longer hikes

Please note, an entrance fee may be required during peak season.





Take in the Trail - Southaven

Do you know how the Pine Barrens were saved?

Southaven County Park is a special place to the Long Island Pine Barrens Society. As the site of the Pine Barrens Protection Act's 1993 signing, Southaven County Park could be considered the birthplace of the protected regional preserve of the Long Island Pine Barrens. With its towering pine and oak trees, winding trails and special connection to water, principally in the form of the Carmans River, Southaven County Park is a symbol for everything that the Long Island Pine Barrens represents.



Governor Mario Cuomo signs the Pine Barrens Protection Act into law on July 14, 1993 at Southaven County Park.

From the 1950s and on, Long Island began to be heavily developed. Houses and businesses were being built rapidly. The Pine Barrens were a large track of open space that was being targeted for development. In the late 1980s, 238 projects were proposed for 43,000 acres of land in the Pine Barrens. The barrens were being destroyed at an alarming rate. Our founders knew that the Pine Barrens were special and that they had to be protected.

Our group, the Long Island Pine Barrens Society, is best known for preserving our Pine Barrens. We launched a six year campaign that involved lawsuits and working with people in Government to pass the Pine Barrens Protection Act. The Act was passed in 1993.

As you walk the trail in Southaven, think about what Long Island would look like without the Pine Barrens. Where would the rare and endangered animals go? Would our water quality be better or worse without the preservation of our forests? Where would people go to enjoy nature?



#3 Southaven County Park

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

#4 Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge

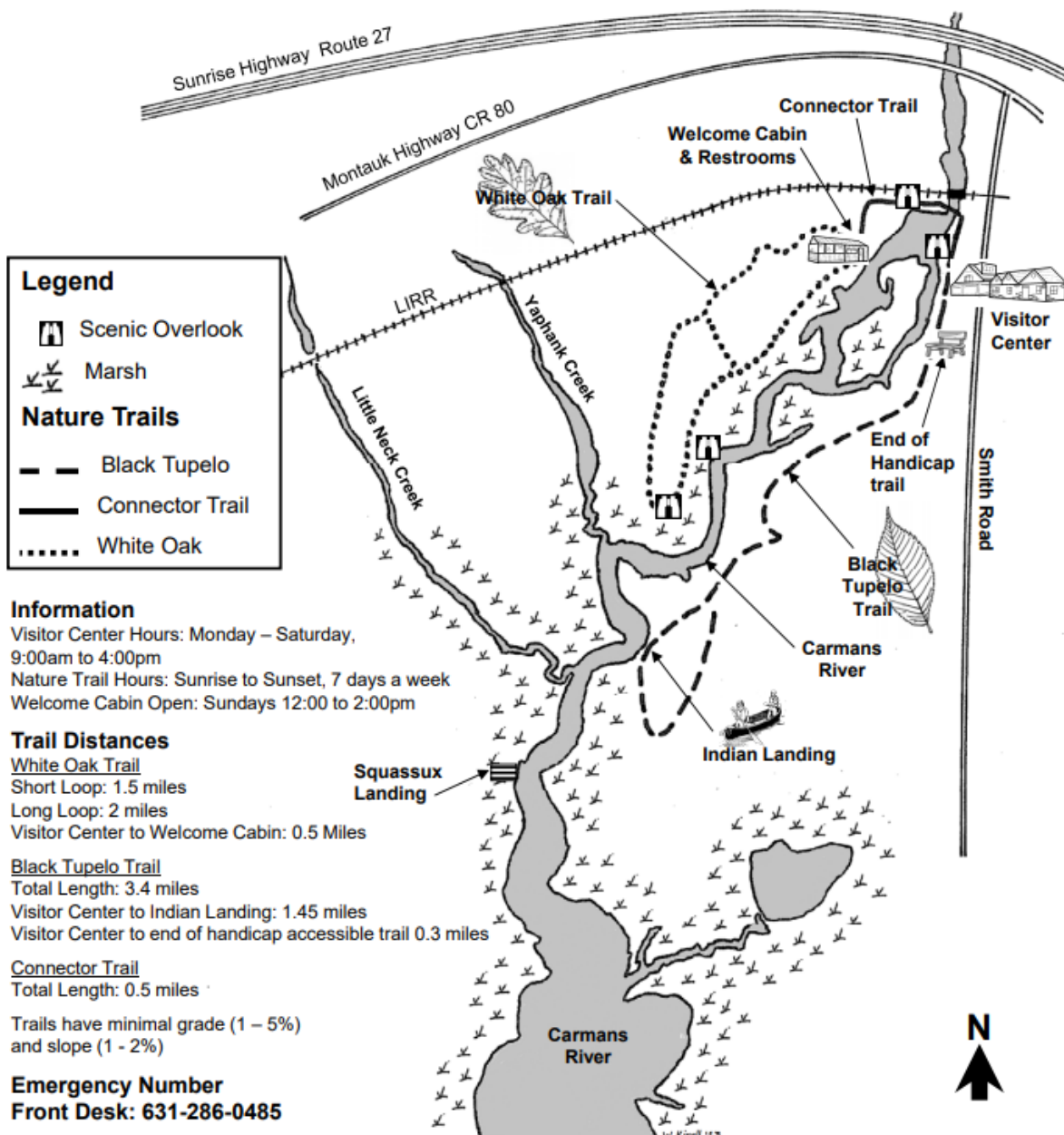
340 Smith Rd, Shirley, NY 11967

Trails ranging from 1.5 to 3.4 miles in length



Trail Map

WERTHEIM NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE





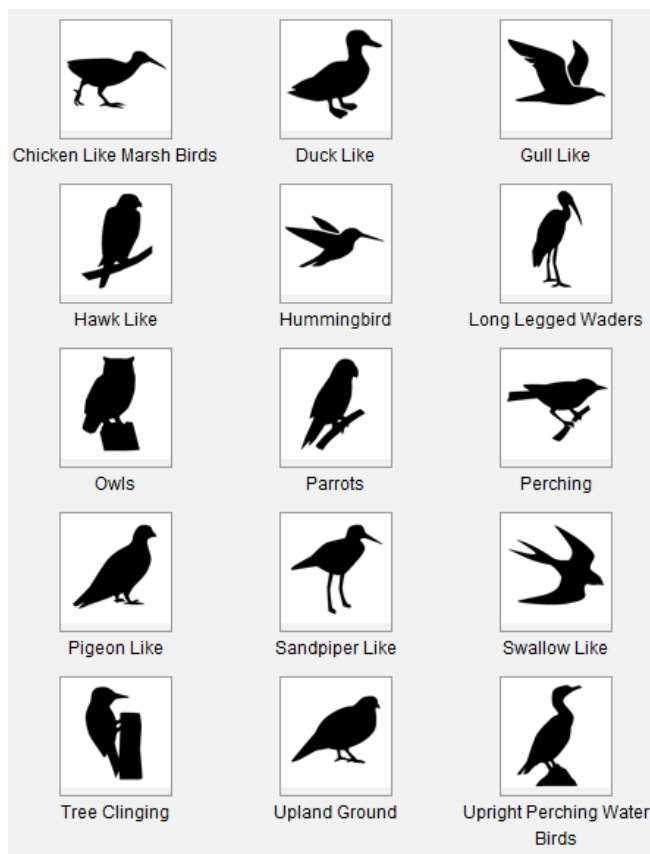
Take in the Trail - Wertheim

Do you see or hear any birds?

The 2,550-acre Wertheim Wildlife Refuge is a haven for wildlife, especially birds! Close to 300 species of birds have been documented here and the refuge can host up to 5,000 waterfowl, over Winter.

Here are some tips on how to best watch for birds:

- Bring a pair of binoculars if you can.
- Keep quiet and avoid sudden movements - birds have excellent hearing and startle easily.
- Avoid wearing brightly colored clothing. Opt for darker earth tones instead, to blend in with your surroundings.
- There are four key features to identifying birds: (1) size and shape; (2) color pattern; (3) habitat; and (4) behavior. Use a pocket guide or type the observed features into google to help you identify the bird. Use the guide below to help you get started.



Make sure to visit Wertheim's great education center!



#4 Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

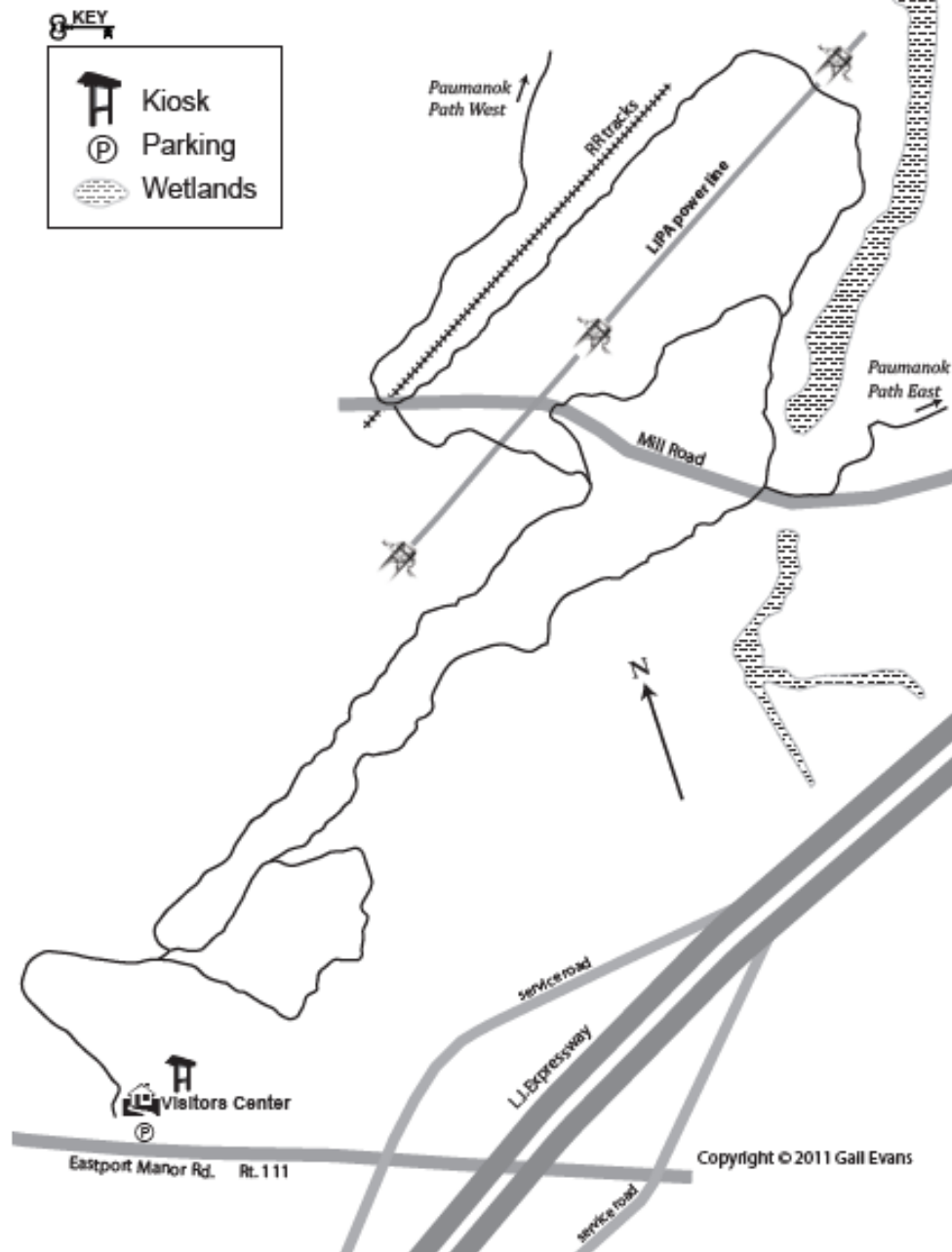
I rate this park:     

#5 El's Wampmissick Trail

Route 111, Manorville, NY 11949

0.75 mile wheelchair-accessible trail, with trail options for longer hikes

El's Wampmissick Trail And Connecting Trails to Paumanok Path

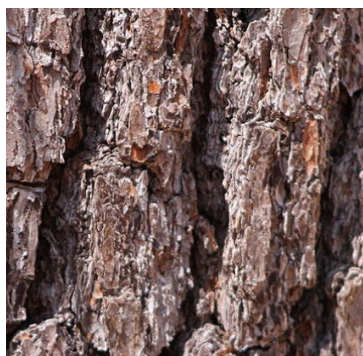


Take in the Trail - Wampmissick

Is fire good or bad for the Pine Barrens?

The Long Island Pine Barrens is a fire-dependent ecosystem. That means that frequent fire is essential to the health of the Pine Barrens forest and helps it regenerate. The plants of the Pine Barrens have many fire-adaptations that you can look for along your hike.

Pitch Pine tree bark acts as an armor. The bark is thick and prevents fire from destroying the living plant tissue beneath it.



Pitch Pine tree pine cones only open and release their seeds after they are exposed to extreme heat. These serotinous cones are covered in a resin that must be melted to release its seeds.



Heath plants in the understory of the Pine Barrens are able to resprout. These plants have rhizomes or underground stems that are protected from wildfire and allow them to resprout after they are burnt.

Fire is what keeps the *Pine* in Pine Barrens.

Without the presence of frequent fire, pitch pine trees are unable to grow and regenerate, and hardwood trees, like oaks, begin to takeover.

Trained foresters work to use "prescribed fire" in the Pine Barrens. Prescribed fire is a fire set by professionals in a controlled setting. These carefully monitored fires allow the forest to regenerate, without the risk of the fire spreading and endangering any nearby homes.



#5 El's Wampmissick Trail

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

I rate this park:     

#6 Cranberry Bog Nature Preserve

3814 Lake Ave, Riverhead, NY 11901

1.0 mile loop



Take in the Trail - Cranberry Bog

Can you spot the pieces of history in this park?

Cranberry Bog Nature Preserve is the site of an old cranberry production farm. As you hike the trail, look for some historic structures leftover from the cranberry farming days - the tar road leading to the bog; earthen dams used to control the water flow; and the old pump house.



Listen to the water flow.

There are several areas along the trail where you will hear water flowing. This preserve serves as part of the drainage system of the Peconic River and is a natural reservoir for Long Island's water supply.

Hot spot for rare plants!

This preserve is the site of the largest remaining coastal plain Atlantic White Cedar Swamp plant community in all of New York State. About half way through the trail, you will be standing in the swamp! This preserve also contains the highest concentrations of rare plant species in New York and hosts a variety of wildlife.





#6 Cranberry Bog Nature Preserve

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

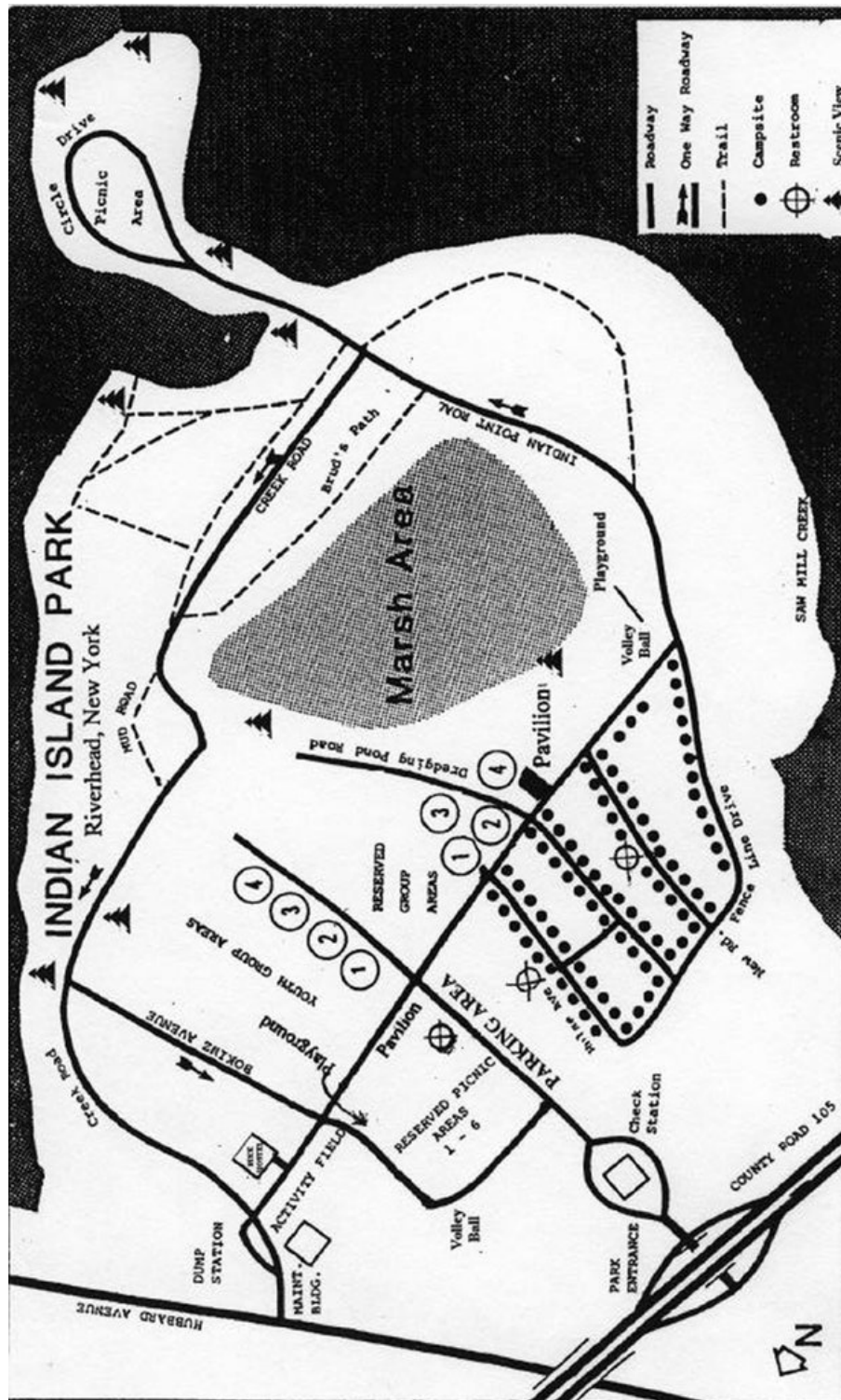
I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

#7 Indian Island County Park

Indian Point Rd, Riverhead, NY 11901

2.7 miles of looped trails, options for shorter walks

Please note, an entrance fee may be required during peak season.



Take in the Trail - Indian Island

Stand between Long Island's two forks!

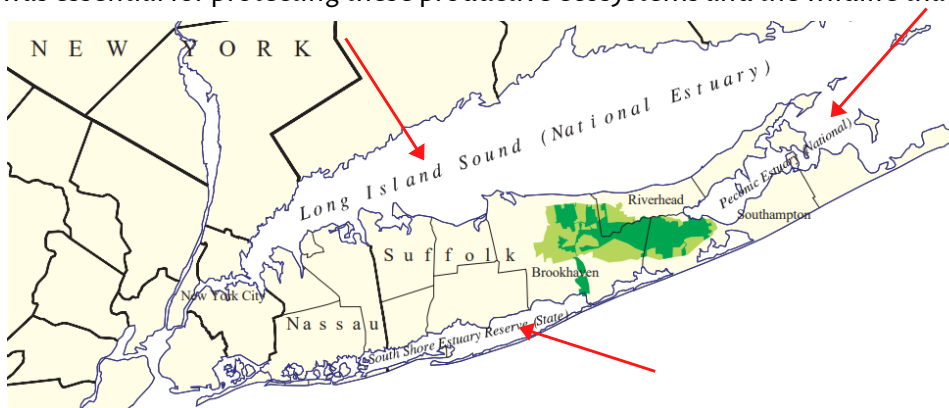
Indian Island County Park sits at the estuarine mouth of the Peconic River. An estuary is an area where a river meets the sea, an area where fresh water from land meets the salt water of an ocean. At Indian Island, the Peconic River flows into Flanders Bay. If you hike to Indian Island's point, you will be standing between Long Island's north and south forks.



Why are estuaries important?

Estuaries are some of the most productive ecosystems in the world! They serve as important feeding, breeding, and nesting grounds for a great variety of fish, shellfish, and seabirds. Some species simply "grow-up" in estuaries before moving out, while other species, like clams, spend their whole lives in estuaries.

The Long Island Pine Barrens interface with two major rivers (the Carmans and the Peconic Rivers), and three estuaries (Long Island Sound, South Shore Estuary and the Peconic Estuary). Protecting the Pine Barrens was essential for protecting these productive ecosystems and the wildlife that call them home.





#7 Indian Island County Park

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

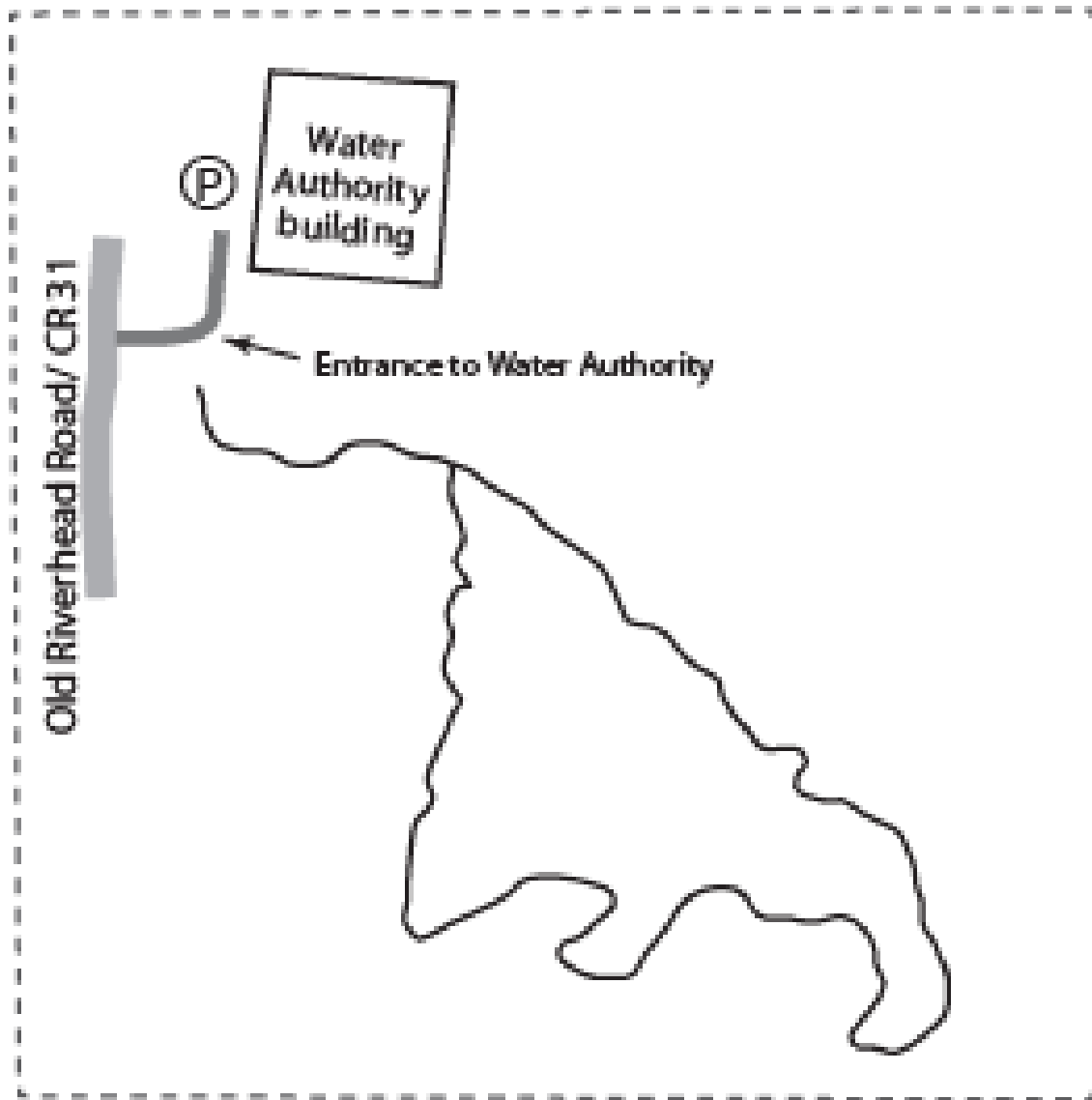
When I left, I felt: _____

I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

#8 Dwarf Pine Plains

624 Old Riverhead Rd, Westhampton Beach, NY 11978

0.6 mile loop





Take in the Trail - Dwarf Pine Plains

Why do you think this area is called the Dwarf Pine Plains?

You're standing in a globally-rare ecosystem! Dwarf Pine Plains only exist in only three areas of the world - one of them being in Westhampton, New York. Dwarf Pines also occur in New Jersey and Upstate New York. The Pitch Pine trees in this area are stunted and short due to the extremely dry, acidic, and nutrient-poor sandy soils. Although the trees are short, they thrive!



Look for Lichens!

Lichens are fascinating and thrive in the Dwarf Pine Plains! They are actually two organisms functioning as single stable unit - they are comprised of a fungus living in a symbiotic relationship with alga (or a cyanobacterium). The fungus and the alga rely on each other for survival. The alga photosynthesizes, providing food for the fungus, and the fungus provides structure, water retention and protection from bright sunlight. Reindeer and British Soldier Lichen are common in the Dwarf Pine Plains.

Reindeer Lichen



British Soldier Lichen

Follow the signs along the trail to learn more about the DPP!



#8 Dwarf Pine Plains

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

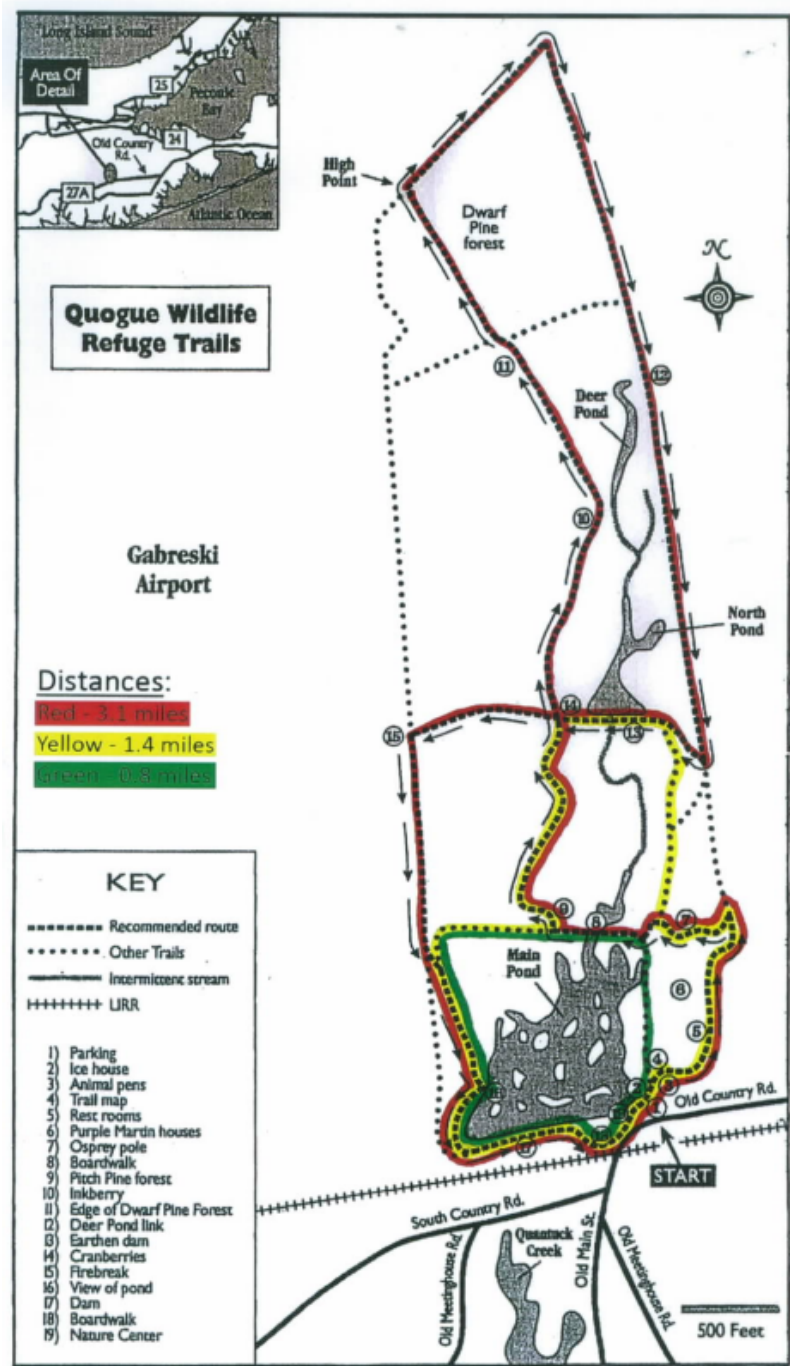
When I left, I felt: _____

I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

#9 Quogue Wildlife Refuge

3814 Lake Ave, Riverhead, NY 11901

Three trails - ranging from 0.8 to 3.1 miles





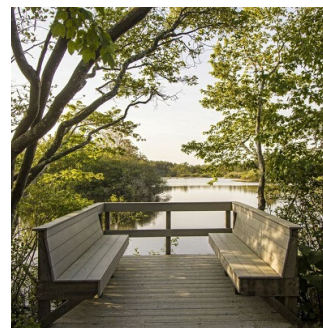
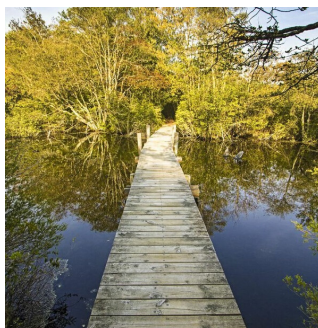
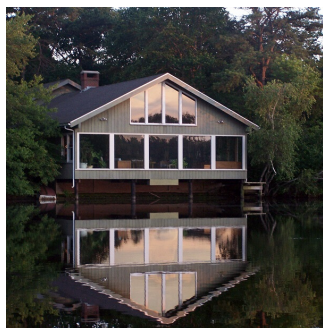
Take in the Trail - Quogue Wildlife Refuge

Quogue Wildlife Refuge is a great example of all things Pine Barrens!

Quogue Wildlife Refuge is the crown jewel of the Pine Barrens! Here you can find examples of all of ecological characteristics that make the Pine Barrens special! As you walk through the Refuge, look for and check-off the following things:

- ☐ Pond
- ☐ Wetlands
- ☐ Flower(s)
- ☐ Bird(s)
- ☐ Pitch Pine Trees
- ☐ Scrub Oak Trees
- ☐ Heath Plants
- ☐ Sandy Soils
- ☐ Dwarf Pines

Make sure to visit the rescued animals and the wonderful nature center!



Photos: Quogue Wildlife Refuge



#9 Quogue Wildlife Refuge

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

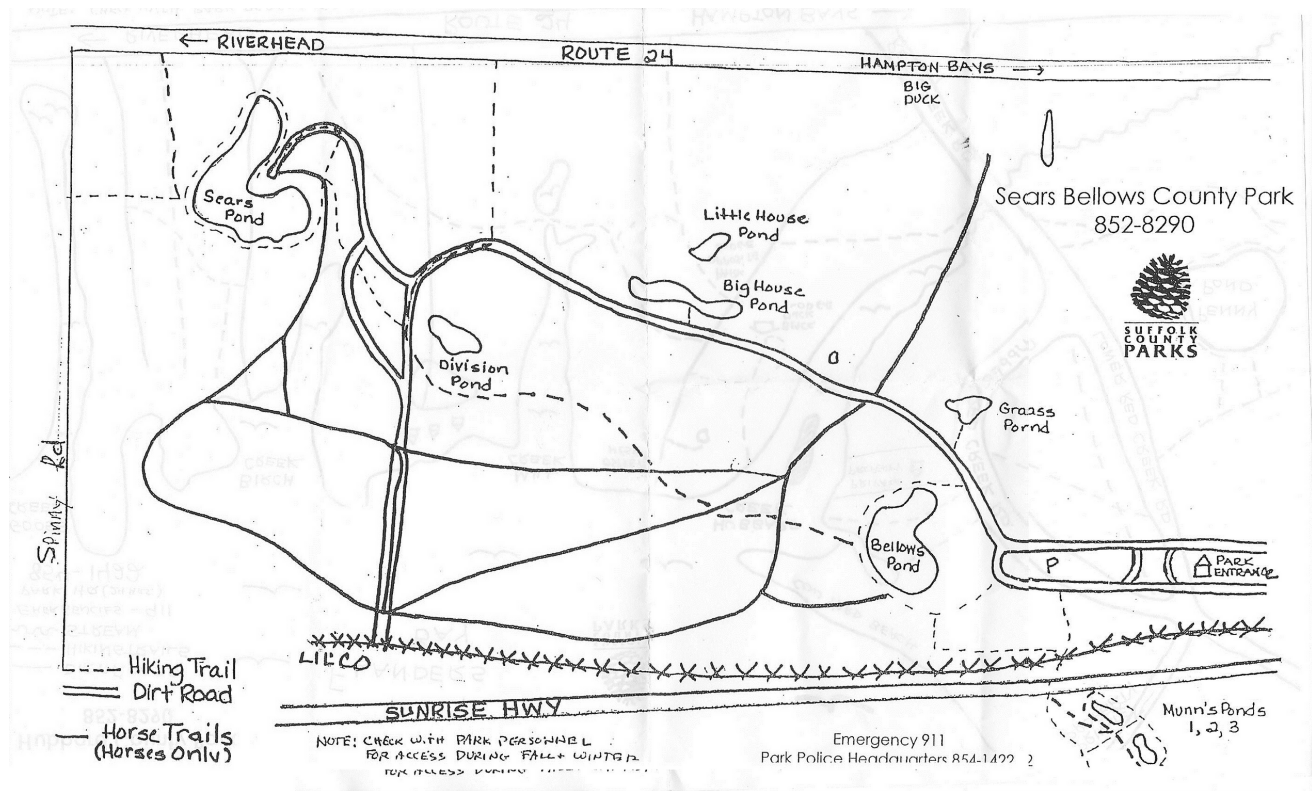
I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

#10 Sears-Bellows County Park

63 Bellows Pond Rd, Hampton Bays, NY 11946

1.5 mile loop around Bellows Pond, with longer trail options available

Please note, an entrance fee may be required during peak season.



Take in the Trail - Sears-Bellows

Trace Long Island's History back 20,000 years!

Throughout your hike through Sears-Bellows County Park, you will come across several ponds. These ponds are called kettle ponds or kettle holes, and can be traced back thousands of years ago when Long Island was formed by a glacier. Long Island was formed over 20,000 years ago, when a glacier retreated, depositing rocks and soils to create our aquifers and create the land we live on.



Kettle ponds were created when large chunks of the ice from the glacier became detached and were left behind. These chunks slowly melted and left large depressions in the soil in their place. Kettle ponds are common in the Long Island Pine Barrens and especially Sears-Bellows County Park.



#10 Sears-Bellows County Park

Date Visited: _____

Weather: _____

Hiked With (Names): _____

First Impression: _____

Sights/Experiences: _____

Wildlife Observed: _____

Favorite Moment: _____

When I left, I felt: _____

I rate this park: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆



**MISSION
COMPLETE**

You are now a Pine Barrens expert!

Do you love this ecosystem as much as we do? Make sure to join us in our efforts to preserve and protect this great place! Please visit our website at www.pinebarrens.org.

