

East Hampton Town Nature Preserve Resource Guide





Eastern Screech Owl
(*Megascops asio*)

Over the past 16 years the Town of East Hampton has established more than 400 nature preserves covering 3500 acres of land and shore. They preserve a variety of habitats including cranberry bogs, swamps, ponds, grasslands, forests, bluffs, dunes, and tidal wetlands. They are vital for the conservation of our native plants and animals.

The nature preserves also welcome passive recreational use. More than half have trails for hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding. Several of

them offer hunting and fishing opportunities.

You will find nature preserves in all parts of the Town. Please enjoy and respect them.

Zachary Cohen
Chairman
Nature Preserve Committee



This pamphlet was created and designed by East Hampton Town Natural Resources Department. Revised October 2009
Andy Gaites, Lisa D'Andrea, Brianna Lindgren-Anderson

What is a Nature Preserve?

The East Hampton Town Code categorizes a Nature Preserve as any area of land or water owned by the Town which is formally dedicated to being maintained as nearly as possible in its natural condition. These lands are chosen for preservation based on the unique and valuable ecological assets situated within their boundaries, and are acquired in part by means of the Community Preservation Fund, a 2% real estate transfer tax created in 1998 which allows the Town to buy these lands. They are protected not only as a means to preserve the land in its natural state, but to create a multi-use recreational resource to be enjoyed by all.



Northern Cardinal
(*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

Why Dedicate Lands as Nature Preserves?

East Hampton's rapid growth and economic development has drawn attention to the necessity of land preservation. A large portion of the cultural heritage and what makes this area unique lies in the wealth of its natural landscape. By



Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

designating portions of the Town's natural diversity as Nature Preserves, and protecting them from drastic alteration and development, we create natural areas which benefit the present generation and create a legacy for the future. Preserving these lands achieves the following objectives:

Nature Preserve Objectives:

Environmental Quality -The environmental integrity of many ecologically sensitive areas is protected and in some cases improved.

Heritage - The rural ambiance and environmental quality that have traditionally contributed to the Town's economic base and continue to provide economic opportunity to its residents is maintained.

Habitat- Rare, threatened, endangered and protected species of flora and fauna, and the many diverse ecosystems they inhabit are defended against degradation.

Geological Features-The beaches, dunes, bluffs, hoodoos, swales, kettleholes, kames, morainal highlands and outwash plains which make this area geologically unique will be safeguarded for generations to come.

Wetlands Protection- Preserved Town wetland areas serve as a means of flood control, water purification, and breeding and nursery grounds for shellfish, fin fish, and other aquatic flora and fauna.

Recreation/Education- Land preserved in its natural state provides an ideal setting for wilderness appreciation, environmental education programs, scientific research, and outdoor recreation of all kinds.

Buffer- Nature Preserves form critical protective buffers.

Watershed/Water Recharge Open land maintains water quality in East Hampton's sole-source aquifer.

Lopped trees, or trees bent into recognizable shapes as saplings, were once used as property boundary markers by the people of East Hampton.

A Shared Responsibility

The **Nature Preserve Committee** is comprised of town residents, members of the Town Board and town officials. Duties of this committee include inventorying and assessing town land for their possible designation as Nature Preserves, maintaining a current register of these properties, and preparing management plans designed to best preserve the unique features of each property.



In 2009 the Land Acquisition and Management Dept. began a restoration of the meadow at the Hands Creek Farm Nature Preserve.



Much of the considerable planning and labor required to properly manage Town Nature Preserves is performed by the

Town of East Hampton **Land Acquisition and Management Department**, as described on the following page.

The **Land Acquisition and Management Department** is responsible for:

 Delineating correct Preserve perimeters with posted signs.

 Removing litter and refuse of all kinds.

 Encouraging indigenous flora growth by removing invasive and exotic species.

 Guarding against, and enforcing laws concerning illicit encroachment by neighboring properties.



Stiff Aster (*Aster linariifolius*)

 Using GPS and GIS technology to generate accurate maps for official and recreational uses.

 Ensuring thorough public awareness of active hunting seasons, designated locations, and regulations through sign posting and distribution of educational materials.

 Regular monitoring and maintenance duties.

 Surveying and cataloging flora and fauna.

Featured Preserves

The next pages will present fifteen “special feature” nature preserves. Diverse in the types of habitats they

encompass, the wildlife they harbor, and the many recreational and educational uses they support, these are some of the best wild places East Hampton has to offer.



*Purple Gerardia (Agalinis purpurea)
along a Shadmoor trail*

**Buckskill
Chatfields Hole
Grace Estate
Grassy Hollow
Sammy’s Beach
Cathy Lester/Soak Hides
Terry Ganley/Maidstone**

**Jacob’s Farm
Gerard Drive & Point
Louse Point
Fresh Pond
Hither Woods
Culloden
Shadmoor
Turtle Cove**



Butterflyweed (Asclepias tuberosa)

Buckskill

Located in Wainscott. Access roads are Stephen Hands Path and Rte. 114



Possibly derived from the Manhasset Indian word buc-usk-kil, meaning, "resting place", the Buckskill Nature Preserve sits atop one of the deepest water recharge areas in East Hampton. The forest, which consists primarily of oak (*Quercus spp.*) and pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*), is bisected by several hiking trails and serves as a prime breeding place for ground nesting birds, including the rare whip-

poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) and hermit thrush (*Catharus guttatus*). The six Town owned parcels that make up the Buckskill Nature Preserve surround a 178.1-acre parcel owned by Suffolk County, creating a contiguous block of over 300 acres of open space.



Chatfield's Hole

Located in East Hampton.
Access road is Two Holes of
Water Rd.



Explorers are invited to take a pleasant stroll in the Chatfield's Hole Nature Preserve, which includes Foster's Path as well as part of the Pau-manok Path. These beautiful trails guide hikers through shady white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and oak forests and allow access to the freshwater pond. State listed plants and other noteworthy plants, such

as the insectivorous sundews (*Drosera spp.*), can be found near the water's edge. Chatfield's Hole was named after the early settler Thomas Chatfield, who was Collector of the Port in 1668 and Town Clerk in the early 1700s.



Grace Estate

Located in East Hampton.
Access roads are Mile Hill Rd., Alewife Brook Rd., and Northwest Rd.



The beautiful Grace Estate was the Town's first large purchase for open space protection, and has been enjoyed by hikers, bird watchers, cross-country skiers, hunters, fishermen, horseback riders, and photographers for over 20 years. At 514.5 acres, the property is the largest of all completely



Town owned Nature Preserves. The idyllic Scoy Pond is a glacial groundwater pond that runs out into Northwest Harbor. The Grace Estate's dedication into the Nature Preserve system in 1993 has protected the valuable natural area for the benefit of this and generations to come.

Michael Collins, Caretaker

Grassy Hollow

Located in East Hampton. Access roads are Northwest Rd., Great Oak Way, Old Hollow Rd



Across from the Grace Estate on Northwest Road, is the enchanting 163.6-acre Grassy Hollow Nature Preserve. Trails, which include part of the Paumanok Path, can be accessed from Northwest Road, Great Oak Way, and Old Hollow Road. The forest is comprised of mostly oak (*Quercus spp.*) and pine (*Pinus spp.*), with some of the tallest white pines on Long Island. The scattered kettle holes make for fascinating visits. The preserve encompasses a small cemetery near Northwest Road that contains tombstones dating back to the late 18th century (See the picture to the left).



Sammy's Beach

Located in East Hampton. Access road is Sammy's Beach Rd.

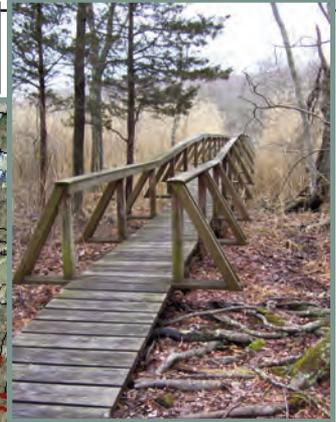


Separating Gardiner's Bay from Three Mile Harbor, Sammy's Beach is a 116.2-acre spit that serves as a habitat for about 50 species of birds among other wildlife. The bay beach provides an excellent nesting area for the

federally threatened piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), the state threatened least tern (*Sterna antillarum*) and other rare breeding birds, as well as a habitat for the New York State rare seabeach knotweed (*Polygonum glaucum*). The present topography of the preserve is partly the result of a disturbance caused by the deposition of spoil from the 1999 dredging of the Three Mile Harbor channel. This historic preserve has since undergone a comprehensive re-vegetation project and is frequented by multiple user groups today. Parking and beach driving permits may be required.

Cathy Lester / Soak Hides

Located in East Hampton. Access roads are Soak Hides Rd., & Springy Banks Rd



Bridge over Tanbark Creek

Dedicated to former Town Supervisor Cathy Lester

for her laudable town-wide preservation efforts as a leader in environmental protection, multiple parcels in this area have been adopted into the Town Nature Preserve system between 1993 and 2004. More than 40 acres of land, including part of the critical Three Mile Harbor watershed have been protected. The Pau-manok Path heads down the worn dirt road at the main entrance on Soak Hides Road and cuts back into the oak woods after offering a serene spot for a picnic by Three Mile Harbor. Note that this Nature Preserve is home to some of the largest known common junipers (*Juniperus communis*) on Long Island. Continue east on the path to find a wooden bridge over Tanbark Creek. Historical records show that Native Americans used this creek to soak hides in the tanning process. Before ending on Gardiner Cove Road enjoy a leisurely stroll through the red maple (*Acer rubrum*) and black tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) wetlands east of the bridge.

Terry Ganley/Maidstone

Located in Springs. Access road is Maidstone Park Rd.



This waterfront property is made up of 10 parcels totaling five acres and was dedicated to the late Terry Ganley in 2007. Part of the preserve is the result

of a habitat restoration project that commenced with the removal of a bulkhead and fishing station, following the Town's acquisition of the property. Terry Ganley was an active member and Chairperson of the Nature Preserve Committee until her passing and was deeply committed to preservation and protection of natural habitats. Adjacent to Maidstone Park, this preserve offers opportunities for fishing, kayaking, swimming and sunbathing. Take note of the tall pole on which State protected ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*)



have nested each year since 1995.

Jacob's Farm

Located in Springs. Access roads are Red Dirt Rd., Neck Path, & Accabonac Rd



Once the property of Jacob Schellinger in 1815, farming took place on parts of the land until the early 20th century, but it has remained un-farmed for more than 50 years. "Jacob's Farm" is actually the name of a subdivision proposed to be built on the large Springs property. Fortunately, the Town and County purchased the 165.4-acre parcel in 2001. In 2003, Jacob's Farm

was designated a Nature Preserve, protecting the Accabonac watershed and the many birds that breed there, including New York's State Bird, the eastern bluebird (*Sialia sialis*). The East Hampton Trails Preservation Society created a helpful trail loop system that linked several existing trail fragments. Jacob's Farm is also an integral part of the newly created Springs-Amagansett Trail. This trail and the 2-mile "blue trail" loop can be accessed from Red Dirt Road.



Gerard Drive & Point

Located in Springs. Access road is Gerard Dr.



Many small lots have been preserved on Gerard Drive with the largest contiguous area at Gerard Point. Gerard Drive is a pleasant road to walk with much open space supporting natural beach vegetation.

See if you can find the tasty glasswort (*Salicornia spp.*) plants near the water on the harbor side at Gerard Point. One will often find people fishing and clamming off of Gerard Point as well. Waterfowl hunting in season is permitted on most of the parcels. Please consult the East Hampton Hunting Guide for more information. Parking permits may be required.

Louse Point

Located in Springs. Access road is Louse Point Rd.



Louse Point is a popular spot for launching kayaks and other small boats in Accabonac Harbor. Adults and children alike enjoy the bay beach where they can pick up shells and play in the sand. Recreational opportunities also include fishing

and waterfowl hunting in season. The East Hampton Town Trustees regulate storage of kayaks and small crafts on racks that are maintained by the Land Acquisition and Management Department. Please contact the Trustees for more information on storage of personal watercrafts. Parking permits may be required.



Fresh Pond

Located in Amagansett. Access roads are Alberts Landing Rd., Cross Hwy. and Fresh Pond Rd



The 116.9-acre Fresh Pond property had formerly been part of what is now known as the Bell Estate. The Town of East Hampton acquired the land from Dr. Dennistoun M. Bell in 1953 and it was preserved in 1993.

While numerous hunters and hikers utilize the land, boaters and fishermen enjoy easy access to the Town Trustee-owned pond. Freshwater streams feed the brackish pond from the northwest, and it is open to Napeague Bay on the east side. Picnic areas, a volleyball field and bathrooms are available to

the public and are maintained by the Town Department of Parks and Recreation. Parking permits may be required.



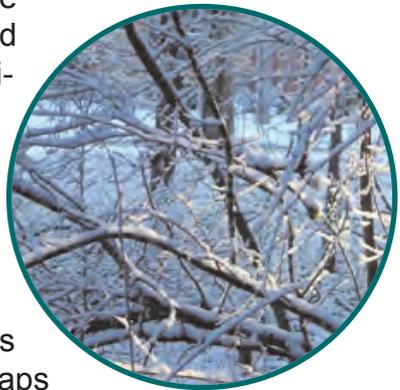
Artwork by Robert Hettiger

Hither Woods

Located in Montauk. Road access is from S.R.27



Hither Woods is comprised of two Nature Preserve parcels that are jointly owned by the Town of East Hampton, the County of Suffolk and the State of New York, as well as other parcels owned completely by the County or State. This largest section of forest preserve on the South Fork consists of almost 3000 acres of hardwoods, including native mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) and american holly (*Ilex opaca*). All varieties of hunting are permitted on the Town Nature Preserve properties and are managed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Over 40 miles of trails run through these woods, some with magnificent views of Block Island Sound. Free trail maps are available at the Hither Hills overlook on the north side of State Route 27.



Charlie Morici, Caretaker

Culloden

Located in Montauk. Access roads are Soundview Dr., Flamingo Ave., Wills Pt. Rd., Kettle Hole Rd., and North Neck La.



Taking its name from the HMS Culloden that ran aground off Will's Point, this impressive preserve contains 174.1 acres of forest, bluffs, beach, old fields, dunes and wetlands. Culloden Nature Preserve supports many plants and animals that are rare in New York State, including scotch lovage (*Ligusticum scoticum*) and the blue-spotted salamander (*Ambystoma laterale*). In addition, the property has trail accesses from almost all of the roads that it borders and is open to big game, small game and waterfowl hunting in season.



Charlie Morici, Caretaker

Shadmoor

Located in Montauk. Road access is from S.R.27



Shadmoor Park and Nature Preserve is made up of property owned by the State of New York, the County of Suffolk and the Town of East Hampton. Shadmoor was one of the Town's first purchases using money acquired by the Community Preservation Fund. Acquired in 2001, many of the 98.9 acres were saved from being developed into a four-lot subdivision. The site contains diverse habitats and numerous rare plants. Perhaps most notable is the federally endangered sandplain gerardia (*Agalinis acuta*). Shadmoor's coastal bluffs offer what is, arguably, one of the most spectacular views in East Hampton. Two artillery fire directing bunkers from the World War II era can be found on the property as one meanders Shadmoor's many dirt roads and trails. Beachgoers can make their way down to Ditch Plains Beach via the connecting trails in the Rheinstein Nature Preserve. Be sure to pick up a free trail map at the kiosk in the main parking lot off Montauk State Parkway.

***The photograph featured on the cover is of the Shadmoor moorlands

Walter Galcik, Caretaker

Turtle Cove

Located in Montauk. Road access is from S.R.27



Adjacent to State land where the Montauk Lighthouse is located, Turtle Cove is surely the furthest east of the Town's holdings. The shore is visited from time to time by sea turtles and seals, as well as a variety of ducks, including eiders (*Somateria spp*) and harlequin ducks (*Histrionicus histrionicus*).

The preserve represents the end of the 125-mile long Paumanok Path that stretches from Rocky Point to Montauk Point. This popular surfing and fishing area is a New York State Visual Resource and presents an exceptional spot to appreciate the beauty of the rising or setting sun.

Parking permits may be required.



Respect the Rules!!

Prohibited Activities:

- ✗ Unauthorized digging and/or artifact recovery
- ✗ Unauthorized woodcutting or clearing of vegetation
- ✗ Abandonment of domesticated animals
- ✗ Dumping of garbage, brush, or refuse of any kind
- ✗ Uncontained fires or burning of any kind
- ✗ Unauthorized vehicular access

Some
Nature preserves may be
chained, gated, or otherwise made in-
accessible at the discretion of the
Town.

East Hampton Town
Land Acquisition and Management Dept.: 324-7420
Town Police: 537-7575
Ordinance Enforcement: 324-3858
Town Trustees: 267-8688

Go to The Town of East Hampton website:
www.town.east-hampton.ny.us
or
Land Acquisition and Management Dept. website:
www.ehland.org

