

# The Preserves and Trail Highlights

Preserves are open from sunrise to sunset.

Most of the hiking trails are moderately easy, with challenging rocky, hilly terrain on the red and purple trails in the Ravine Trail Preserve.

No motorized vehicles or fires are allowed.

## Access

To access Selden Creek Preserve and the Ravine Trail, parking is located on the west side of Joshuatown Road, about 4 miles north of the intersection of Joshuatown Road and Rte. 156. About 1 mile further north, a driveway on the right leads to a few parking spaces at the Selden Cemetery parking lot. Non-motorized travel is allowed on a half-mile of the old Pratt Road right-of-way to access the head of the purple trail on Brockway-Hawthorne. The main parking lot for the Brockway-Hawthorne Preserve is on Brush Hill Road about 1/2 mile south of Hadlyme Four Corners. There is roadside parking on Mitchell Hill Road at the eastern entrance to the Ravine Trail.

## Selden Creek Preserve

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) owns the Selden Creek Preserve on the west side of Joshuatown Road. One of the most biologically significant sites on the lower Connecticut River, the Selden Creek Preserve takes its name from the creek that divides it from the 600-acre Selden Neck State Park. With wooded hills and pristine freshwater tidal marshes, it provides vital habitat for many plants and animals, including songbirds, shorebirds and rails, and is also a critical site for wintering bald eagles. Both the Selden white (SW) and the Selden blue (SB) trails lead to overlooks on spectacular vertical cliffs above the wetlands that provide dramatic vistas of the marshes and the creek.

## The Ravine Trail

On the east side of Joshuatown Road, the Ravine Trail is shared by TNC and the Lyme Land Conservation Trust (LLCT). The B-H white trail (BW) follows an old farm road by a vernal

pool and through abundant mountain laurel. To the right and further along on the red ravine trail, stone seats on either side provide respite for the hiker beside a very large boulder with common polypody fern growing on its top. The yellow trail provides an easy loop back through the woodlands to Joshuatown Road. With the demise of the hemlocks due to the invasive woolly adelgid, the hardwood trees including red oak, white oak, yellow birch, and sugar maple have begun to thrive as more light infuses the forest. Continuing on the red trail, steep cliffs tower on either side of a small tributary stream. There is a well-defined drainage divide in this ravine where water flows north to Whalebone Cove on one side, and south to Joshua Creek on the other side. The red ravine trail, and the northern sections of the purple trail, are beautifully dramatic rocky hikes with some steep hill climbs. Be sure to take a side trip on the blue trails for overlooks of the beaver meadow. Years ago, a beaver dam flooded the wetlands so that the large trees died, creating the meadow. The dam has been abandoned and a successional forest is emerging.

## Brockway-Hawthorne Preserve

The 82-acre Brockway-Hawthorne Preserve, owned by the LLCT, helps protect the Whalebone Cove watershed. The white, purple and orange trails meander along or cross Whalebone Creek at wooden bridge crossings. Vital wetlands, including several vernal pools, support a healthy population of amphibians, and other flora and fauna. Also here are stands of healthy hemlocks that escaped the scourge of the woolly adelgid, amid mature hardwood trees and thickets of mountain laurel. From the Brush Hill Road parking lot, the loop of B-H white trail (BW) onto yellow trail and back, provides a delightful mile-long walk over a natural open savannah-like terrain with evidence of past human activity. Ancient oak trees still stand guard over the former pasture land bordered by stone walls and an old abandoned quarry.

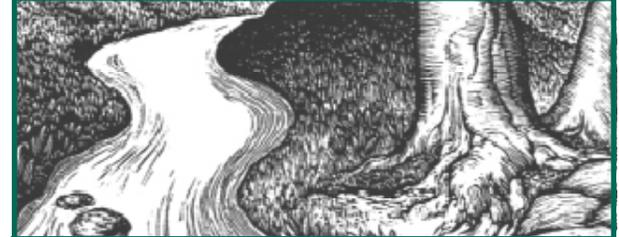
*Report any comments or problems during your visit to The Nature Conservancy at [ct@tnc.org](mailto:ct@tnc.org) or fill out a trail report: <http://www.lymelandtrust.org/trail-report/>*

## TRAILS OF LYME

Selden Creek Preserve

Ravine Trail

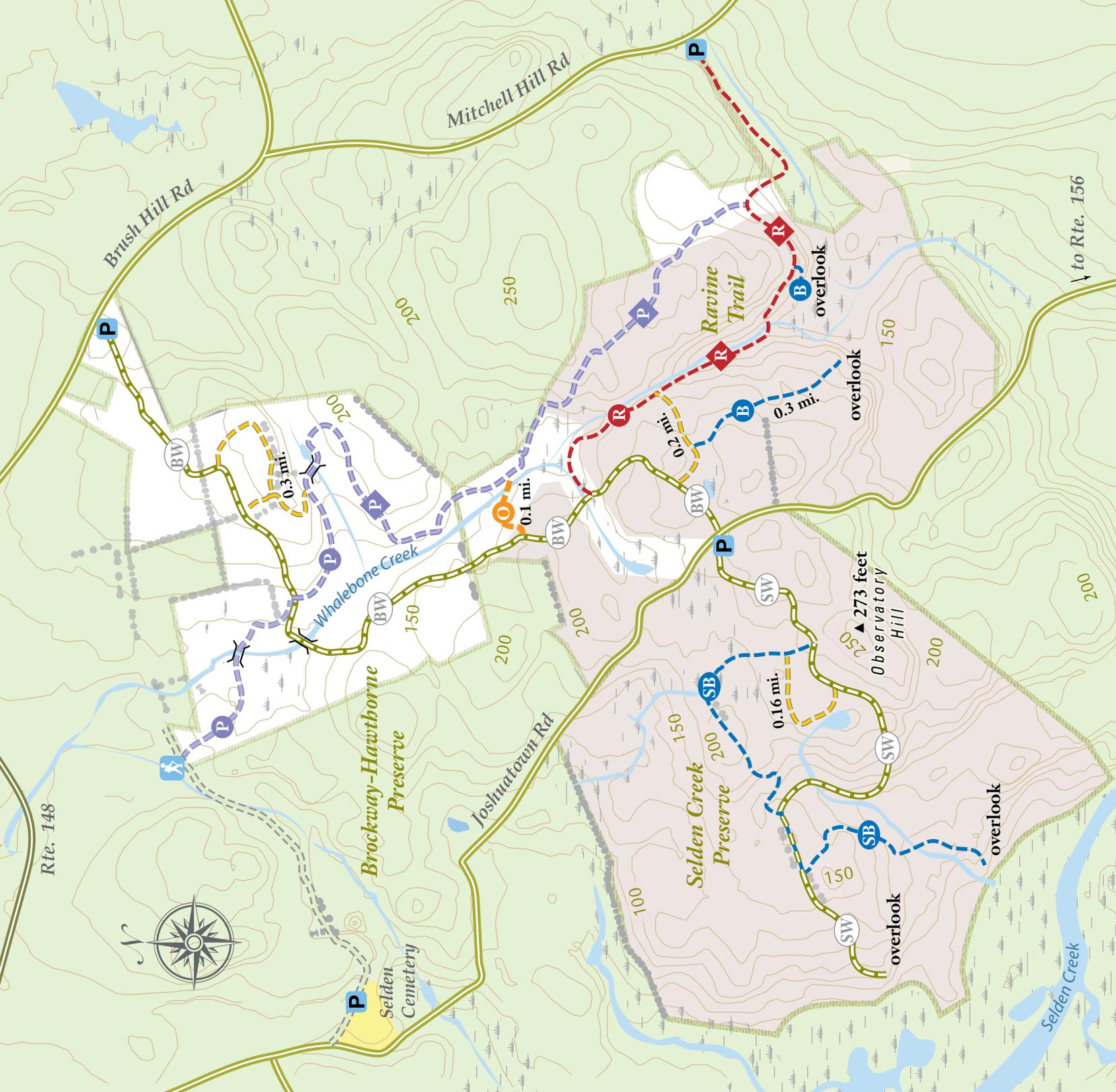
Brockway-Hawthorne Preserve



Thomas W. Nason, *The Brook*, Florence Griswold Museum; Lyme Historical Society

This unique network of trails traverses an amazing variety of vibrant natural habitats and features on 476 acres. The three contiguous preserves together create a valuable corridor for wildlife species, and protect vital watershed resources.

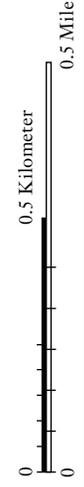
The Nature Conservancy (TNC) created the original 101-acre Selden Creek Preserve in 1986 through a purchase of 55 acres from the late Ferdinand W. Coudert. In 1995, TNC purchased 207 acres that front the tidal marsh. The Ravine Trail, on the other side of Joshuatown Road, originated from a donation of 13 acres to the Lyme Land Conservation Trust (LLCT) in 1991. In 1998 Ron Phillips donated 9 acres off Mitchell Hill Road to the LLCT. Abutting this parcel is the 70 acres that TNC purchased in 2000, in a bargain sale, from Tai Soo Kim and Stanley Fellman and 6 acres purchased in 2001 from Dr. Clement E. Marks Jr. and the estate of Michael Mercurio. The 82-acre Brockway-Hawthorne Preserve was purchased by the LLCT in 2017, in a bargain sale from William and Anna Hawthorne, with funds from the CT DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program, the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut, and members of the community, including the Hadlyme Challenge Grant spearheaded by a lead donor.



SELDEN CREEK PRESERVE  
 RAVINE TRAIL  
 BROCKWAY-HAWTHORNE PRESERVE (B-H)



- SELDEN BLUE TRAIL 0.85 mile
- SELDEN WHITE TRAIL 0.82 mile
- RAVINE TRAIL 0.8 mile
- B-H WHITE TRAIL 1.2 mile
- PURPLE TRAIL 1.5 mile
- CHALLENGING TERRAIN
- TNC PROPERTY
- LICT PROPERTY
- PARKING
- PRESERVE BOUNDARY
- WETLANDS
- BRIDGE



For general reference only 9/30/17