

Selden Creek Preserve

HOURS: Dawn to dusk

LOCATION: Parking on the west side of Joshuatown Road 1.4 mi northwest of the intersection of Joshuatown and Mitchell Hill Roads in Lyme

ACTIVITIES: We invite you to explore the properties on both side of Joshuatown Road using the trails indicated on the reverse side. You are welcome to bring a picnic lunch to the preserve, but please leave no trash—it's not just unsightly, but it can attract species that may be harmful to rare plants and animals. Remember, take only pictures, leave only footprints! **Mountain biking is not allowed on any trails on this preserve.**

FEATURES: One of the most biologically significant sites on the lower Connecticut River, the Selden Creek Preserve in Lyme takes the name of the creek that divides it from 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. Spectacular vertical cliffs along the marshes provide dramatic vistas of the marshes and the creek.

Ravine Trail

Starting from Mitchell Hill Road, the trail follows an old farm road and parallels a stream draining a swamp enlarged by a beaver dam, which flooded the original trail. This section

of trail follows an east-west set of bedrock fractures that are common in Lyme. The forest consists primarily of hemlocks and hardwoods, including red oak, white oak, yellow birch, and sugar maple. The understory is laurel. With the demise of the hemlocks due to the wooly adelgid, the hardwood trees have begun to thrive as more light infuses the forest. Spur trails now lead to the pond, but the through trail has been rerouted up and over a ridge.

Beyond the beaver dam, the trail turns right with steep cliffs on either side of a small tributary stream which eventually flows into the Connecticut River to the south. This section of the Ravine Trail follows a set of N-S fractures that are also common in the bedrock of Lyme. The intersection of the N-S and E-W fractures forms the distinctive blocky topography of Lyme. Stone seats on either side of the trail provide respite for the hiker near a very large boulder on the left, with common polypody fern growing on its top.

There is a well defined drainage divide in the "ravine section" where water flows north to Whalebone Cove on one side, and south to Joshua Creek the other side. Further along the trail there is a micro-watershed on the right with abundant laurel and beyond a vernal pool.

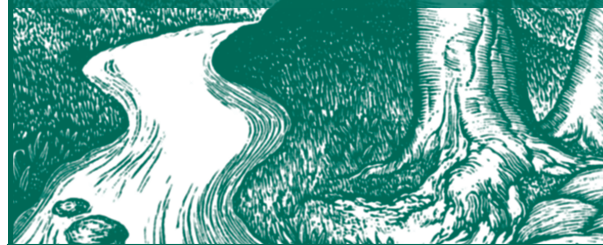
Report any problems during your visit to The Nature Conservancy at ct@tnc.org or the Lyme Open Space Coordinator: openspace@townlyme.org

TRAILS OF LYME Selden Creek Preserve

The Nature Conservancy, Connecticut Chapter

& The Ravine Trail

Lyme Land Conservation Trust



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

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) created the original 101-acre Selden Creek Preserve in 1986 through a purchase of 55 acres and the donation of an adjacent 46-acre conservation easement by the late Ferdinand W. Coudert. In 1991 the Lyme Land Conservation Trust (LLCT) received a donation of 13.1 acres across Joshuatown Road from the original Preserve. In 1995, TNC purchased 207 acres that fronts the tidal marsh. In 1998 Ron Phillips donated 9.35 acres off Mitchell Hill Road to the LLCT as part of the Josie Perkins subdivision approval, which allowed the LLCT to develop the Ravine Trail. Abutting this parcel is the 70 acres that TNC purchased in 2000, in a bargain sale, from Tai Soo Kim and Stanley Fellman. The preserve reached its current size of 394 acres with the purchase of 6 acres in 2001 from Dr. Clement E. Marks Jr. and the estate of Michael Mercurio.

