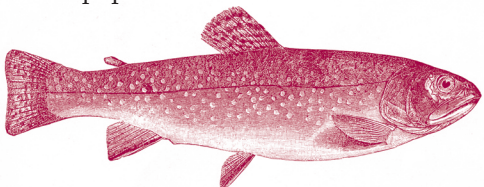


The Last Mill in Duxbury

Built about 1830, Howland's Mill was probably the last mill built in Duxbury. It was situated on the bank of Phillips Brook. This was originally built as a grist mill, but later changed to a saw mill. The mill had many problems with too little water, so a ditch was dug through the hill, bringing water out of Black Friars Swamp across Franklin Street to the stream. This ditch can still be seen alongside the bank of the brook. The old mill foundation can also be seen, with granite foundation sides still holding. The mill faced Franklin Street and had a large well several feet below the dam. Water was funneled over the dam and dropped on the wheel to power the mill. From there, the water ran under the street through a culvert.

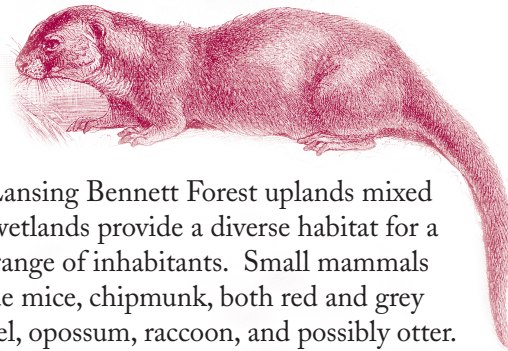
The Trout of Lansing Bennett Forest

Flowing south to north, Phillips Brook is a 1.8-mile long tributary of the South River, full of trout. After the Howland's saw mill closed, Phillips Brook was used as a trout farm. Fish were transported by train to markets and restaurants in Boston. The upper section, above Union Bridge Road, was the site of the farm. Trout must have a cold water stream, and areas where they can hide, such as deep pools, whirlpools, and covered edges of stream banks. A recent study by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) found that the brook still contains numerous wild brook and brown trout populations.



Vegetation and Wildlife

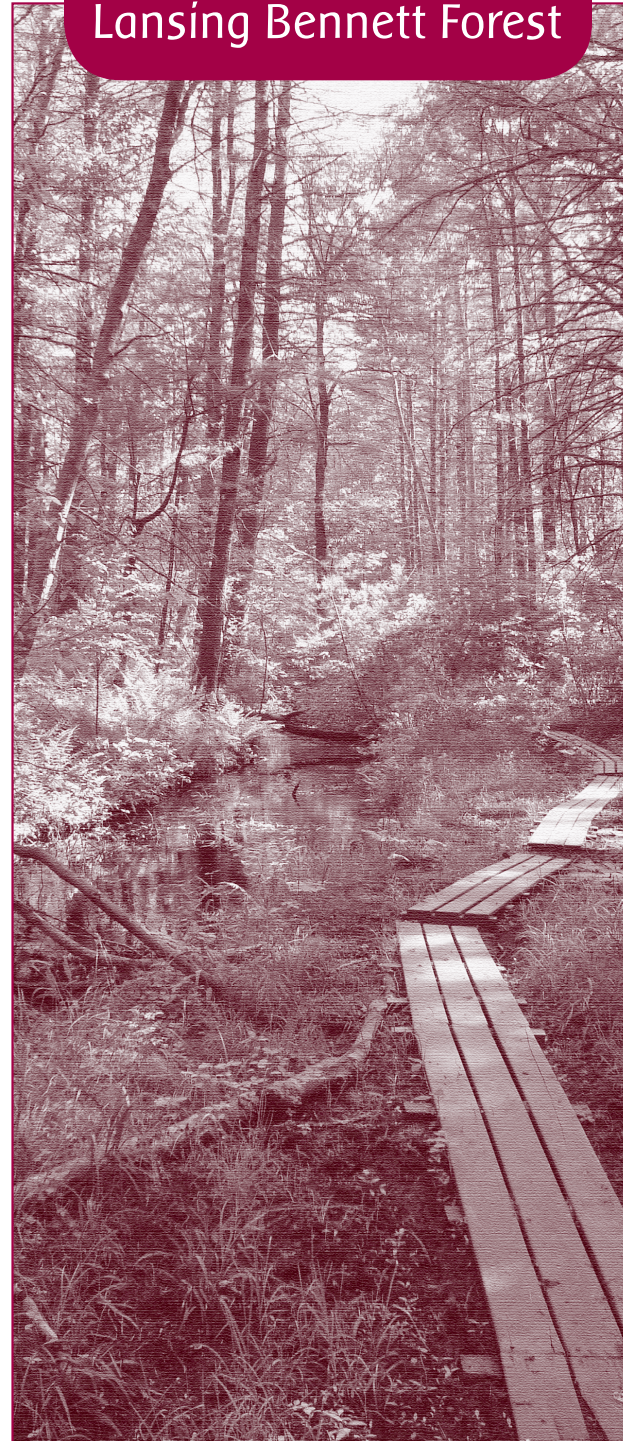
The vegetation along Phillips Brook is characteristic of wetlands habitat. The understory along the edge is made up of sweet pepperbush and high-bush blueberry. The primary species tree is red maple, constituting a typical maple swamp. Upland areas are a pine-oak mix, mostly Eastern white pine, red oak and white oak. In some spots, there is a small population of Eastern hemlock. In the pine-oak upland forest there is very little understory vegetation. Some of the kettle holes have typical maple swamp vegetation and some standing water. In both the uplands and along the brook there is poison ivy, so please be careful.



The Lansing Bennett Forest uplands mixed with wetlands provide a diverse habitat for a wide range of inhabitants. Small mammals include mice, chipmunk, both red and grey squirrel, opossum, raccoon, and possibly otter. The only large mammals that inhabit these woods are white-tailed deer.

In the wetlands, reptiles and amphibians dominate. There are painted, spotted, and box turtles in both wooded and brook-front areas. There are a number of salamanders and frogs living under rocks and logs along the brook. The most common are redback salamanders, wood frogs, and American toads. There are a fair number of woodland bird species such as black-capped chickadees, white-throated sparrows, blue jays, and occasional woodpeckers, red-tailed hawks, and great horned owls. However, these are not the only species that inhabit these woods.

Welcome to Lansing Bennett Forest



Welcome!

The town conservation area formerly known as Trout Farm was dedicated to the memory of Dr. Lansing Bennett, chair of the Duxbury Conservation Commission from 1967 to 1979. Dr. Lansing Bennett sought to preserve the rural charm of Duxbury and its wetland resources by developing the greenbelt plan of land extending along the river watersheds throughout the town. During his time on the commission, he helped obtain more than 1,200 acres of conservation land and secured the passage of the Wetlands and Watershed Protection District Bylaw. The 344 acres that comprise Lansing Bennett Forest was one of his most satisfying acquisitions. Renaming this parcel was a fitting tribute to a dedicated public servant.

Lansing Bennett Forest was purchased by the town in July 1970 from the Lot Phillips Company, a wooden box manufacturer formerly located in Hanover. The Phillips Brook watershed occupies about 25 to 30 percent of the land, and is maple swamp, considered to be wetlands. The remainder of the parcel is largely pine-oak mixed forest. The terrain is made up of kettle holes, pits or depressions left by melting of isolated blocks of ice, leaving hills and valleys, some steep-sided. It appears that today's topography is just as the glaciers left it upon retreating thousands of years ago.

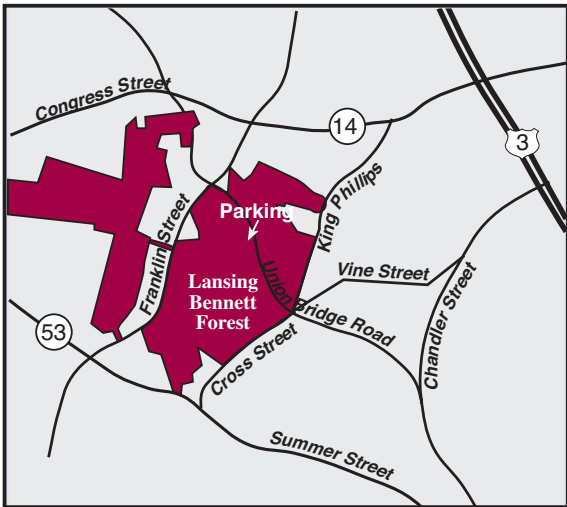


The Bay Circuit Trail

The Bay Circuit Trail is the grand vision of a single urban planner in the late 1920s. Charles Elliot II devised a concept of a “greenbelt” ringing Boston from the North Shore to the South Shore. This 200-mile-long trail lies roughly between routes 95 (128) and 495 in a semicircle around metropolitan Boston. The Bay Circuit Trail forms a chain linking 79 areas of green space in an emerald necklace from Plum Island in Newburyport to Bay Farm in Duxbury.

The Charcoal Pit

Along the trail leading from the parking area is a former charcoal pit. After the American Revolution, the ship-building industry required charcoal for the smelting of bog iron ore. Trees were cut and piled in a circle 20 feet in diameter and dirt was piled over this pyramid after the fire was established. After several days, the dirt was pulled off and the charcoal removed. This process created a circular mound containing charcoal, which is still visible more than 100 years later.



Rules and Regulations

- Open sunrise to sunset
 - To protect wildlife:
 - Hunting and trapping are prohibited
 - Dogs must be under your control at all times
 - Please clean up after your dogs, so others may enjoy this site
 - To protect the land:
 - Camping, fires, dumping, littering are prohibited
 - Motorized vehicles are prohibited
 - Cutting or removing vegetation is prohibited
 - New trail or other construction is prohibited
- Enjoy hiking, jogging, fishing, horseback riding, skiing these trails, and exploring the woods and fields.

Please contact the Duxbury Conservation Commission for full regulations and stewardship information.

Questions? Duxbury Conservation Commission
781-934-1100 ext 134,
www.town.duxbury.ma.us/conservation

Emergencies? Duxbury Police Department, 781-934-5656

