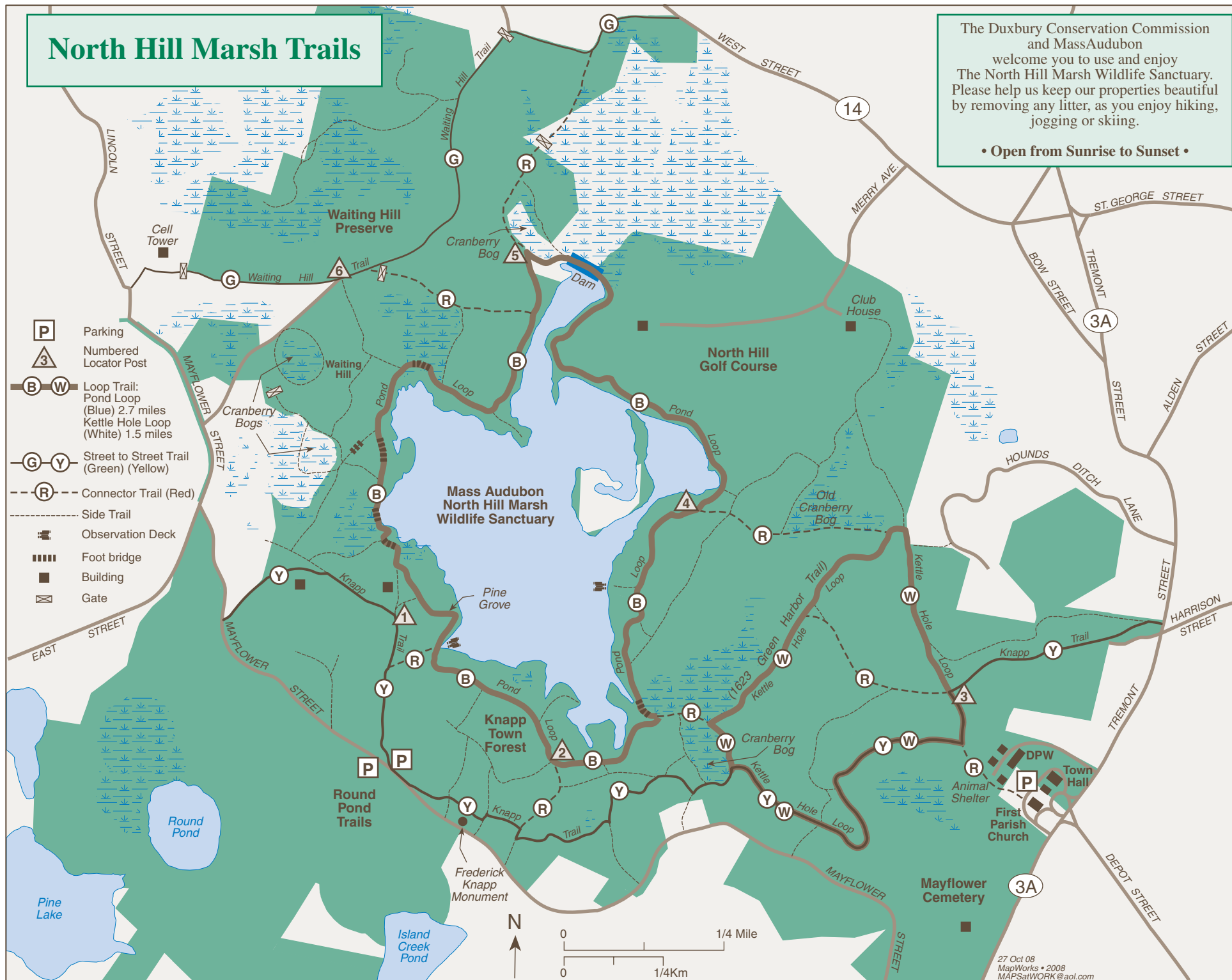


## North Hill Marsh Trails



## Mass Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary

Mass Audubon's North Hill Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary forms the heart of this protected habitat. The marsh was created when a brook was dammed to supply local farms with water and to power a saw mill. In the 1920's a group of local sportsmen bought the property for duck hunting. Fifty years later, the Trustees of the North Hill Marsh Trust dedeed the area to Mass Audubon.

The Sanctuary, 90 acres of reservoir and marsh and 30 of upland, was Mass. Audubon's first acquisition on the South Shore. Mass Audubon maintains its forest in a natural state, allowing underbrush to grow and fallen trees to remain as shelter for small animals. White pines, pitch pines, and several varieties of oaks grow in the upland forest, while red maples grow close to wetlands. In 1940, a second dam was built by an abutting cranberry grower and the water level of the marsh rose, resulting in the many dead trees seen today. These dead stands provide excellent habitat for waterfowl feeding and breeding.

In the spring and summer, dragonflies, damselflies and other insects dart around while frogs and salamanders inhabit the marsh and vernal pools. Black-crowned night herons, great blue herons, great horned owls, red-tailed hawks, and osprey can be seen flying over the marsh and a variety of ducks and geese feed among the marsh trees.

Around 100 pair of tree swallows inhabit the nesting boxes placed throughout the marsh. These quick birds eat flying insects and help abate the mosquito population. During fall migrations, large numbers of wood ducks and ring-necked ducks gather in the pond to feed and rest.

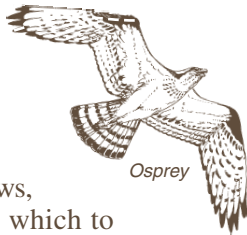
The upland, marsh and vernal pools provide habitat for a variety of plant and animal life. Mammals include mice, mink, chipmunks, red and gray squirrels, muskrat, opossum, raccoon, otter, coyotes and white-tailed deer. Reptiles and amphibians thrive with the birds and insects of the marsh area. Snapping, painted, and the rarer spotted and box turtles can be seen along the shore and in wooded areas.



Welcome to North Hill Marsh

Part of Duxbury’s Eastern Greenbelt, North Hill Marsh is one of the Town’s largest contiguous portions of open space. This property covers 823 acres of woods and wetlands. North Hill Marsh is easy to find and offers Duxbury’s most extensive trail network. From the parking lot, on the north side of Mayflower Street, the loop around the marsh is a brisk one hour hike.

Owned and managed by Mass Audubon and the Town of Duxbury, the site is primarily a wildlife sanctuary, offering walking trails with sweeping water views, and observation decks from which to spot herons, hawks, owls and waterfowl from beneath the quiet majesty of tall white pines. The Pond Loop circles North Hill Marsh, providing delightful pond, cranberry bog and woodland views. A section of trail on the east side of the marsh is part of the historic 1623 “Green Harbor Trail” that connected Plymouth and Marshfield.



A joint management plan guides work at North Hill Marsh which is made up of several parcels owned by different public and private groups. The Duxbury Conservation Commission manages the town-owned land which includes the Knapp Town Forest (the town’s oldest holding), Waiting Hill Preserve (bought for aquifer protection in 1986), four Town Well sites and the North Hill acreage (land that had been farmed for 300 years, part of which is now the North Hill Country Club). Mass Audubon owns the pond itself, the pond edge, and some upland habitat. Working together, North Hill Marsh provides an opportunity for the community to enjoy seasonal happenings on a large forested tract that will forever be protected.

Respectful use of this part of the Town's Greenbelt System will help protect surface and ground water resources and unfragmented forest and wildlife habitats.

Frederick B. Knapp Town Forest

The Town Forest is an 27-acre stand of tall pines that lies along Mayflower St. about a half mile west of the Transfer Station. In the 1880’s Fredrick B. Knapp, Head Master of the Powder Point School for Boys, mathematician and conservationist, urged the town to set aside the land for town forest. The town purchased land in August of 1929 and in 1933 the land was formally named as a memorial to Mr. Knapp who had served the town in many capacities for over 50 years.

The Knapp Town Forest is distinguished from other North Hill areas by the tall and orderly stands of white pines. The trees form a quiet, majestic canopy and allow for little undergrowth, just as Knapp, an early champion of forest fire prevention and Town Forester, had planned.

Waiting Hill Preserve

In 1986, town meeting approved the purchase of 120 acres in the North Hill area for aquifer protection. The acreage was named Waiting Hill for the tallest point in the vicinity. At 140 feet, Waiting Hill is the second highest hill in Duxbury after Captain's Hill (180 ft) on Standish Shore. In Duxbury’s sailing ship days, residents climbed Waiting Hill to search the eastern horizon for sight of homeward bound ships. Today this view is obscured by forest.

North Hill Country Club

Originally the “North Hill Farm,” this area was purchased by the Town in 1977. Part of it is leased as the North Hill Country Club with a nine-hole golf course. The lease is administered under the jurisdiction of the Duxbury Recreation Director, with the advice of the North Hill Golf Committee. The golf course was built on historic farmland, some of which began as "beaver meadow" where the vegetation was cleared by beavers. This fertile land was cultivated from the 1600’s into the twentieth century, when the Merry family ran the last dairy farm there.

Rules and Regulations for Use of the North Hill Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary

- Open Sunrise to Sunset •

To Protect Wildlife:

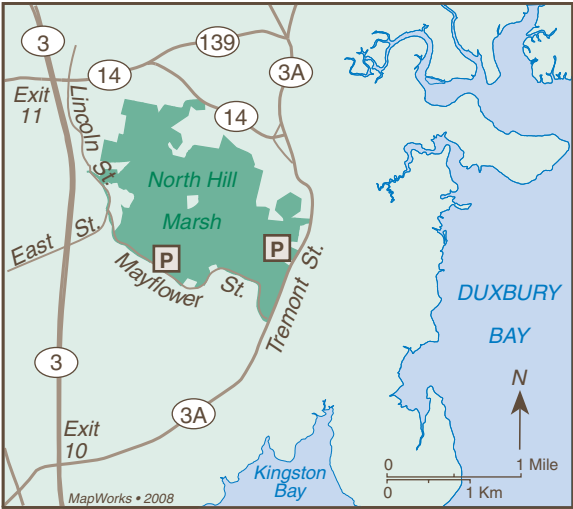
- Boating, fishing, hunting, or trapping are prohibited
- Dogs must be under your control at all times
- Please clean up after your dogs, so others may enjoy this site

To Protect The Land:

- Camping or fires are prohibited
- Motorized vehicles are prohibited
- Cutting or removing vegetation is prohibited
- Trail or other construction is prohibited

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

Mass Audubon works to protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife. Together with more than 100,000 members, we care for 33,000 acres of conservation land, provide educational programs for 200,000 children and adults annually, and advocate for sound environmental policies at local, state, and federal levels.



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Welcome to the North Hill Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary



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