

Milton Town Forest

Guide ♦ History ♦ Map



View of Milton Pond

Overview

The Milton Town Forest (MTF) is located in the eastern portion of Milton on 492-acres. The forest surrounds Milton Pond, the 24 acre centerpiece of the property. Visitors can explore trails with scenic viewpoints and elevations ranging from 840 to 1200 feet.

Permitted Uses

The Town Forest Management Plan strives to preserve the ecological values of the property and enhance the recreational opportunities listed below. Enjoy!

- ▶ **Trail Hiking & Running**
- ▶ **Bird Watching**
- ▶ **Cross Country Skiing**
- ▶ **Snowshoeing**
- ▶ **Fishing** (Licensed & Responsible)
- ▶ **Hunting** (Licensed & Responsible)



What to Know Before Starting Out

- ✓ Restroom facilities are not available.
- ✓ Follow the permitted uses.
- ✓ Take out what you bring in. No waste disposal is provided.
- ✓ Pets must remain fully under control and shall not disturb natural communities or the experience of other users.
- ✓ Respect neighbors and private property.
- ✓ The ledges and wetlands throughout the area contain sensitive habitat. Please remain on trails.

History

The forest has a long history of diverse uses. Settlers began farming the area in the late 18th century and at least 7 foundations can be found on the property. By the middle of the 19th century, much of the land had been cleared for pasture and many of the farmers turned to grazing sheep, providing an economic boom in wool exports. From 1923 to 1993, the pond provided Milton with a source of drinking water. Until 1963, Milton Pond was owned by the Milton Water Corporation and later the Champlain Water District. The Town of Milton purchased the land in 1969. The Selectboard designated the area a Town Forest in 1991. In 2006, the Town purchased the adjacent Bove property, adding 135 acres to the forest, a portion of which is located in the Town of Westford.

Flora and Fauna

Milton Town Forest supports a wide variety of vegetation and wildlife.

The forest is mostly comprised of hardwoods such as maple, oak, beech, birch and some apple trees from former farms and homesteads. Visitors will encounter a variety of softwoods and evergreens such as hemlock, cedar and white pine. Wildflowers identified in the forest include coltsfoot, trout lily, lady's slipper, wild sarsaparilla, cow parsnip, Canada mayflower, starflower, trillium and closed gentian.

Over 50 species of birds have been observed,

including chickadees, blue jays, robins, warblers, crows, ravens, hawks, belted kingfishers, owls, grouse and turkeys. Visitors often report sighting mammals such as beaver, otter, deer, moose, black bear, porcupine, fisher, mink, fox, coyote and bobcat.

Significant wetlands on this property provide habitat for snapping turtles, painted turtles and frogs. Milton Pond contains warm-water northern pike, bullhead and yellow perch. Newts, salamanders, toads, spiders and garter snakes wander the edges of the water, while butterflies and dragonflies take to the air.

Main Trail Details

Town Forest Access Trail [orange blazes]
(0.75 mile) *Easy/Moderate*

Trail from MTF parking lot is the main access to MTF and Milton Pond. This easy trail runs through the old tree farm, fields and woods to the Old Marquette Farm Road which follows the edge of Milton Marsh. It's a moderate climb from there up to the Four Corners junction.

Pond Circuit Trail [blue blazes]
(2.25 miles) *Easy/Moderate*

From the Four Corners junction, this trail creates just over a 2 mile circuit around Milton Pond. The trail crosses three wooden bridges on the south side then goes through the woods, under the power lines on the western side and over the Spillway Bridge. The trail then loops around to climb the moderate ridges on the eastern side, back under the power lines, and back up to the Four Corners junction.

Ridgeline Trail [yellow blazes]
(3 miles) *Moderate/Strenuous*

From the Four Corners junction, the trail climbs through woods and a rocky area, before descending to The Saddle, near the highest point in the MTF. The trail then drops down beneath cliffs, through woods, and under the power lines on the western side, and eventually crosses Bridge 5. To the north, the trail crosses a couple of fields and steadily climbs onto the ridges, crossing under the power transmission lines (with good views toward Mt. Mansfield), and to

the View Point, and drops back to the Town Forest Access Trail just before the Four Corners.

Side Trail Details

Dry Woods Bypass (0.15 mile) [orange blazes]
This easy woods trail parallels the Old Marquette Farm Road and Milton Marsh on the Town Forest Access Trail.

Pond View Loop (0.5 mile) [green blazes]
Off the Pond Circuit Trail, beyond the Four Corners, the trail follows an old logging road to the edge of Milton Pond, then loops around a point with a beaver lodge, and climbs through woods to intersect the Pond Circuit Trail just above Bridge 2.

Skid Road Trail (0.25 mile) [lavender blazes]
This trail is off the southern section of the Ridgeline Trail, about a half mile up from the Four Corners junction. The trail drops down an old logging skid road, coming out next to Bridge 2 on the Pond Circuit Trail, creating about a one-mile loop from the Four Corners junction.

Viewpoint Link (0.1 mile) [red blazes]
A steep connection between the Pond Circuit Trail and the Viewpoint on the Ridgeline Trail on the eastern side, close to the Four Corners junction.

Carriage Barn Links (0.1 mile) [red blazes]
[opposite 460 Westford Road]
Optional seasonal parking for four vehicles on private land; paths through fields connect to the Ridgeline and Pond Circuit Trails.

Your Experience Matters

If you have any questions, ideas for improvement, would like to get involved or would like to report an incident of concern, please let us know. Your input will ensure that future generations may also enjoy this land.

Town of Milton Conservation Commission
43 Bombardier Road, Milton, VT 05468.
802.893.1186. Learn more about the Milton Conservation Commission at www.miltonvt.org.