

Stations

7. **VYCC Bridge and Yellow Birches:** This footbridge, constructed in 2006 by the **VT Youth Conservation Corps**, spans one stream near its convergence with another. From here you can see several **Yellow** (or “**Silver**”) **Birches** (*Betula alleghaniensis*), trees that are well suited to moist, northern woods. The tree’s lenticels form horizontal lines in the bark that stretch as the tree grows causing the bark to peel. Yellow birch is source of **wintergreen oil** and supplies food for **ruffed grouse (buds)** and **deer (twigs)**.

8. **Ferns:** **Fern** in Sanskrit means “wing” or “feather.” Several species of easily identifiable ferns are visible in this area. The **Sensitive Fern** (*Onoclea sensibilis*) was named for its light green, wavy-edged leaflets that die down with the first hard frost. The bead-like spore cases are located on a separate, fertile frond. **Cinnamon Fern** (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) bears its spores on a cinnamon brown stalk. **Wood Ferns** (*Dryopteris* species) have finely cut leaves and small **sori** (piles of spores) on the under side of fertile leaflets. **Christmas Ferns** (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) have leathery, stocking shaped leaves that are easily visible in winter. Most fern fronds emerge from **rhizomes** in a “**fiddlehead**” shape that protects delicate leaflets from being torn.



Wintergreen
Gaultheria procumbens
Courtesy of Dorothy Martinez

History

At the east end of the trail you are looking at what remains of the **International Paper pulp mill**, built in 1898, at the foot of **Milton Falls**. The mill provided a boon to Milton’s economy as many men were employed to build the plant. The large steel penstock was necessary to funnel the water from the dam down to the powerhouse. The plant employed 75 to 80 men who processed spruce pulp, which came mostly by rail from Canada. The business was abruptly closed by a strike in 1925 and never reopened.

The lower Lamoille River is the last stretch of an 85 mile waterway that flows west into Lake Champlain. At the east end of the trail you can see the first dam that was built on the lower Lamoille. The second dam that was built is above at **Clark’s Falls**, forming **Lake Arrowhead**. The last dam, built in 1948, is the **Peterson Dam** which is located down river.

The river basin has offered us a bounty of nature and a wealth of history since the days the early Native Americans roamed its shores. Cross the little bridge into the woods and experience a wonderland of ferns, wildflowers and wildlife as you follow the trail along the Lamoille River.

* **VYCC:** “**The Vermont Youth Conservation Corps** is a non-profit youth, leadership, service, conservation and education organization that instills in individuals the values of personal responsibility, hard work, education and respect for the environment. This is accomplished by using conservation projects as the vehicle for learning in an intense environment.”

Lamoille River Walk

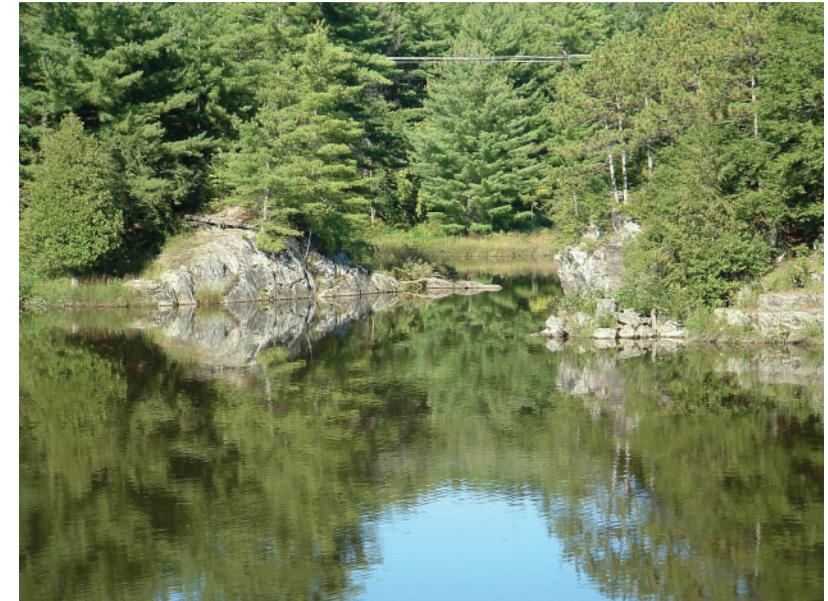


Photo by Regina Mahony

"Take only pictures.

Leave only footprints."

About half of this trail is on property that was retained by the Town of Milton through open space set aside from Checkerberry developments. The other half of the trail is on Central Vermont Public Service Corporation (CVPS) land provided through a generous license agreement. This allows The Town to lay out, maintain and use this recreational foot path. In addition, the Hurkes Corporation generously provided the Town with an easement for a short stretch of land on the eastern portion of the trail.

Milton Conservation Commission

2007

Directions:

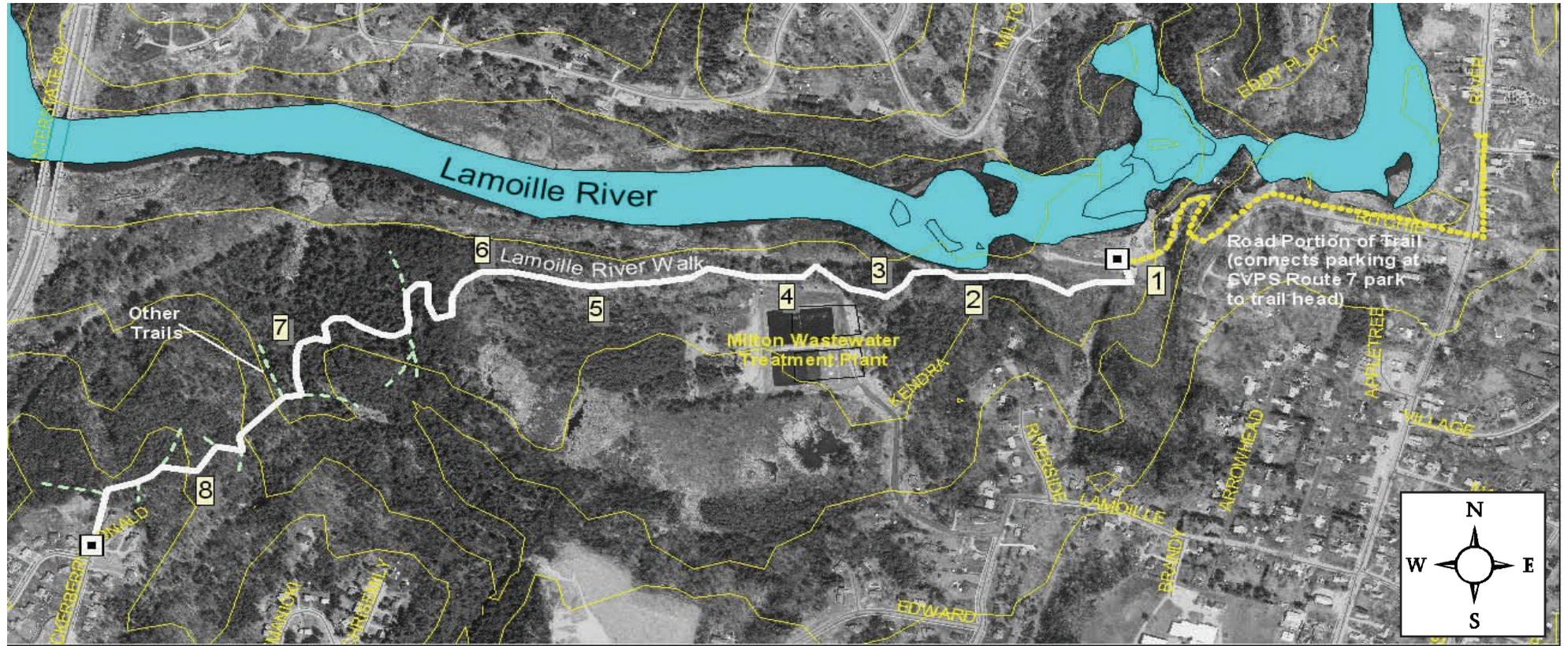
Checkerberry Trail Head: From Route 7 head north on Nancy Drive. At the end of Nancy Drive take a left on to Checkerberry Square. Follow Checkerberry Square to the end. Park at the very end of the road and walk north toward the trail head.

CVPS Trail Head: From Route 7 head west on Ritchie Avenue all the way to the CVPS gate (sometimes closed). Beyond the gate go down the switchback road, past the brick building and the old foundation. The trail head is along the tree line, south of the old foundation. [Park at CVPS's Route 7 park.]



Partridgeberry
Mitchella repens

Courtesy of Dorothy Martinez



Stations

1. **Horsetails:** The straight, green stems that form the primary groundcover here are **Rough Horsetails (*Equisetum hiemale*)**. The plant's durable, silica-ridged stems were used as natural sandpaper by tinsmiths and woodworkers who called it the **Scouring Rush**. Rough Horsetails reproduce by **spores** or by underground stems called **rhizomes**.

2. **Riverview:** This section of the Lamoille River below Milton Falls is a popular fishing and canoeing site. Flood tolerant **Speckled Alder (*Alnus rugosa*)**, a native shrub, has warty stems and cone-like female catkins. **Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*)**, with orange flowers (July-Aug.) and spring-loaded seeds, has juicy stems that can be used to relieve bites or stings. **Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium maculatum*)**, with a speckled, 6 ft. stem, produces pink flowers in flat-topped clusters (July-Sept.).

3. **Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*)**, a creeping evergreen vine with paired, rounded leaves prefers moist, acidic soils so is often found under **white pine** and **hemlock**. This slow-growing, native plant is named for Virginia botanist **Dr. John Mitchell** who identified "new" species as he mapped the American colonies. Its red berries nourish **grouse**, **wild turkeys** and **foxes** in the winter.

4. The **American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)** is related to **American chestnuts** and **oaks**. It has smooth, gray bark and leaves with parallel veins, each leading to a marginal tooth. Beech trees produce triangular nutlets in prickly burs starting at about age 10 with an abundant "**mast**" yield every 3 to 5 years. Rubbery **Beechdrops (*Epifagus virginiana*)**, a snapdragon relative, is a beech root parasite and produces two-lipped, reddish flowers in the fall.

5. **The Cathedral:** This grove of **Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)** is locally known for its towering "ceiling" and quiet, needle-strewn undercover. The flat sprays on these evergreens bear half-inch needles with white lines called **lenticels** (breathing holes) on the underside. At about age 20, mature hemlocks begin producing pollen and small cones whose enclosed nutlets provide food for **squirrels**, **rabbits** and **deer**.

6. **Stream Crossing:** The **Ermine (*Mustela erminea*)**, is a reddish brown member of the weasel family that turns white in winter. Weasel tracks with an 11 inch stride have been seen here in light snow. The green, grass-like **Sedges (*Carex* species)** on this stream bank may serve as scent mark sites for many animals. Unlike rounded, knobby grass stems, sedges have solid, triangular stems. Sedge seeds are eaten by **grouse**.