

Pootatuck Road, including the current driveway, was the main road from South Britain to the Housatonic and Bennett's Bridge. The French general, Rochambeau, reportedly marched his army over this road on their way through Southbury toward the end of the Revolutionary War.

The **Clark house** is a private residence. The red brick portion is Federalist in style and dates from the 1820's to the 1840's. The wooden part rests on the footprint of a connected barn that was once attached to the house. The Clarks razed the connected barn and rebuilt the inside of the house in 1934. The **barn and bird balcony** Amos Mitchell built this barn shortly after the Civil War. It has several nice period details such as the rounded windows and the cupola. Inside the barn is the trail log and exhibits including the Clark's beautiful buggy and sleigh as well as the Audubon offices. The balcony overlooks a bird feeding area and is a favorite of birders and non-birders alike. The Clarks remodeled the barn in the 1930's putting stables in the basement. Audubon further restored the barn in the 1990's. The **Herb Garden**, just to the north of the barn, is a delightful little garden, built in memory of Harriet Koons, and is maintained by members of the Southbury Garden club.

Audubon owns both sides of the **Pomperaug River** for almost a mile. This piece of the Pomperaug is undisturbed and wild because no fishing is allowed. Muskrat, beaver, otter and mink can all be found. Bald eagles regularly fish here.

The **Medici Wildflower Meadow** is adjacent to the visitors parking lot. Come visit it throughout the year as every season offers its own different beauty.

Althea's Meadow was also used as a hay field. In season, we can find, among the clumps of big bluestem, Canada lily, wild bergamot, mountain mint, sedges, dogbane and three species of milkweed. Their **Memorial Hill** was a favorite spot of the Clarks where they would sit and survey their domain. Their ashes are buried here.

The **Cedar Fields** are an example of old meadow habitat, once common in Connecticut, but now increasingly rare. They provide important ecosystems for many species of mammals and birds, which will live and nest nowhere else. At the south end of these fields, lies a meadow of little bluestem.

The **Rockslide** on Pootatuck Road: This glacial rockslide is rich in forest plants and flowers. During the spring, vernal ephemerals bloom amongst the rocks and many ferns can be found throughout the summer. The **Overlook** gives a good view of the lower Pomperaug valley. The Housatonic valley lies to the right, receding to the southwestern horizon.

At **Scalo's Overlook**, you can see from Fairfield Hills in Newtown to the west to Bridgewater and Roxbury to the north.

The **Cascade** is a beautiful, seasonal little waterfall in the forest. It usually is running during the autumn to late spring.

Points of Interest along the Trails

A Brief History:

Native Americans have probably lived in this immediate area for around 10,000 years. They almost certainly practiced slash and burn agriculture on the Pomperaug River flood plains starting approximately 1000 AD.

The name comes from early deeds citing “ye Bent of ye River” as a landmark. In the 1700's, the village of South Britain was also known as Bent of the River.

Eleazer Mitchell bought the “South Purchase” from Manquash, the last sachem (or chief) of the Pootatucks, in the 1750's. The land included what is now Audubon land as well as the still active Mitchell Farm on Purchase Brook Road. Eleazer built his farmhouse about a mile from the current house and barn, closer to the Housatonic. His son Benjamin was probably the first European to farm on the land around the Clark house.


During the middle of the last century, most of the farm's land was cleared. As is typical with many rural places in Southern New England, you will find stonewalls snaking through now thick forest. Many of these walls were built in the 1830's when, the farmers had run out of wood for rail fences. The Mitchells continued to live on and farm the property until late 1920's, when William E. Mitchell died. His children did not wish to farm and sold the property to Howard G.B. and Althea Ward Clark in 1934. The purchase price was \$15,000 and included the house, barn and 350 acres of land. Over time, the Clarks purchased another hundred acres from various neighbors.

When Mrs. Clark, who had long been a leading force in local conservation, died in 1993, she left the Bent of the River to the National Audubon Society.

Trail Fees

Suggested trail use fees are \$5.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children and seniors. *Trails are free for members of the National Audubon Society.*

- Only Hiking Allowed on Trails: No motorized vehicles, cycling or horseback riding
- Please remain on Marked trails: Hiking and exploring off trail may cause damage to sensitive habitats and species.
- No Hunting, Fishing or Collecting allowed.
- Please leave all pets at Home! Domestic pets may become lost, damage sensitive ecosystems, or disrupt wildlife.
- Carry in and Carry Out: Please take everything you brought with you back home with you.
- Leave only your footprints.
- Check for ticks! Stay toward the center of our trails and tuck your socks into your pants.
- Use of repellents is recommended.


Audubon
 CENTER BENT OF THE RIVER
 185 East Flat Hill Rd.
 Southbury, CT 06488
 203.264.5098
 bentoftheriver.audubon.org

The Cascade



Audubon received the Bent in 1993 from Althea Clark's estate. At that time, it totaled 460 acres. In November 2000, Audubon purchased another ninety-two acres, called Sachem's Ridge, to protect the ridge line and several valuable wetlands and vernal pools to the northwest. Along with another hundred, contiguous acres where Audubon holds conservation easements (Pinetree and Crider Easements), the Center now protects over a square mile of land.

The Center Director lives in the Clark House. The Audubon Center welcomes inquiries about our programs from educational, scouting and other groups interested in any aspect of natural history and conservation.

Audubon at the Bent:


Audubon
 CENTER BENT OF THE RIVER

**TRAIL
 MAP**

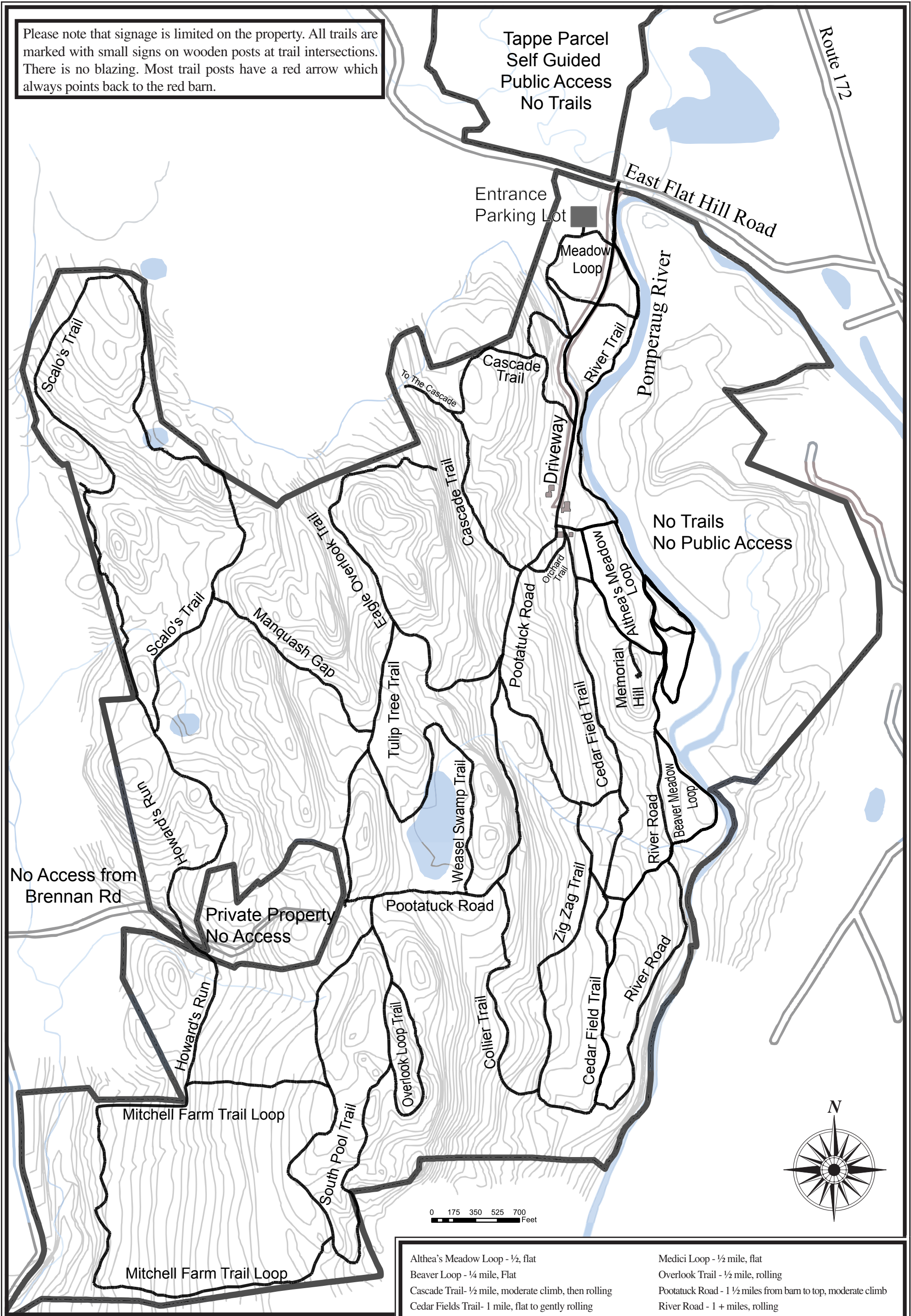
Trails are open daily sunrise to sunset



Audubon's mission: conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats.

The Center is for the protection, study and enjoyment of Nature.

Please note that signage is limited on the property. All trails are marked with small signs on wooden posts at trail intersections. There is no blazing. Most trail posts have a red arrow which always points back to the red barn.



Tappe Parcel
Self Guided
Public Access
No Trails

Route 172

Entrance
Parking Lot

East Flat Hill Road

Pomperaug River

No Trails
No Public Access

No Access from
Brennan Rd

Private Property
No Access

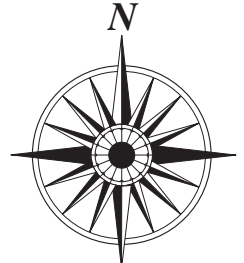
Pootatuck Road

River Road

Mitchell Farm Trail Loop

Mitchell Farm Trail Loop

0 175 350 525 700
Feet



Althea's Meadow Loop - ½ mile, flat	Medici Loop - ½ mile, flat
Beaver Loop - ¼ mile, Flat	Overlook Trail - ½ mile, rolling
Cascade Trail- ½ mile, moderate climb, then rolling	Pootatuck Road - 1 ½ miles from barn to top, moderate climb
Cedar Fields Trail- 1 mile, flat to gently rolling	River Road - 1 + miles, rolling
Collier Trail - ¾ mile, moderate climb	South Pool Trial - ½ mile, moderate
Eagle Overlook - 1 mile round trip, mostly moderate with two short steep sections	Tulip Tree Trail - ¾ mile, steep in parts
Howard's Run - 1 mile, moderate climb in parts	Scallo's Trail - 1 ½ miles, steep and rough in parts
Manquash's Gap - Trail to Sachem's Ridge - ¼ mile, steep in parts	Zig-Zag Trail- 1 mile, rolling
Mitchell Farm Trail - 2 miles, rolling to moderate to steep	

TRAIL LENGTHS AND DIFFICULTY