

Ready for the Next Adventure?

Winter will soon be over and we'll be seeking to reconnect with the sounds and teasing warmth of early spring. So let's embark on our next open space adventure together!

The site of our adventure is the "Harasimowitz Property", acquired in 2012 through Hebron's Open Space Land Acquisition Fund. This stunning 20-acre property lies in anticipation of its visitors along Old Colchester Road, nearly directly across the street from the Transfer Station. Tread lightly on this pristine preserve, protected for its critical environmental functions it provides for us.

The journey begins just beyond a metal gate, the entrance point to this whimsical forest. A wide pine-needled covered path gently welcomes us to the sanctity that lies ahead! Step slowly into the cathedral of majestic white and pitch pines, an uncommon find. Vivid green ferns and princess pine trim the feet of these forest elders. Soak in the peace and quiet that this Evergreen showroom offers our senses.



The soft path leads us to...a forest pond! Streams of sunlight, cascading between the protective arms of pond side trees, reflect onto its inky glass surface. Traversing along the tranquil shoreline, we peer into its serene confines in search of movement. Look, over there! Two couples in swimming tandem, as ducks often are, seemingly intertwined in their search for the basics, food and shelter.

We forge on, wondering what surprises lie ahead. Shhh!!! Look up, an owl. Wow, there she goes, ghostly quiet! What else will this enchanted path offer us in this wonderland? From atop a knoll on the carpeted trail, it looks like a clearing of sorts in the distance. Let's check it out! Huh, a beautiful swamp, Judd Brook Marsh, actually! Approaching this next surprise, we see an expanse of low shrubs and marshy grass pods. Blueberry bushes aplenty here, a welcome provider of nourishment for

the marsh's inhabitant birds. As we stand at the marsh's edge, it looks like we can enter the marsh itself. Yes, but be careful, make sure you step gingerly on the grass mounds or you might get wet feet! Made it, time for a picture!

What else is here? The path seems to follow the marsh's outer perimeter, northerly, so let's go. Yes, the path continues, undulating a bit up and down. Catching different glimpses of this scenic Special Concern Wetland is the feature here. Let's head back to where we first encountered the marsh, where the path offered a gentle left turn to where we stand now.

Peering east from the point of the bend, it appears we can continue our adventure on a less discernable, but appealing narrow pathway. With the marsh to our left, a ringing chorus of spring peepers has commenced. What marvelous singing, and a sure sign of warmer days! Ah, peepers, my favorite. A little further we can go. Alas, we have reached the pinnacle of our adventure, at the banks of a quiet stream flowing through the heart of the Marsh, a tributary of Judd Brook. It

looks so refreshingly wild here. Dead trees spike upward like daggers, remnants of an ancient forest ...now transformed into this Marsh, of Special Concern, I can see why. Just listen and quietly observe. Feeling at peace, let's head back, leaving our preserve as pristine as we discovered it. I hope you enjoyed our adventure!

Frank Zitkus
Hebron Open Space Land Acquisition Committee Secretary

Note: There is very limited roadside parking available on Old Colchester Road near the metal gate entrance. Please be careful; secure pets and little ones. There is additional, currently unmarked, open space parking south of the entrance along Old Colchester Rd, but it is a little ways down the road. Caution advised in this location as well. Practice "Leave No Trace" on this open space gem.