

VISITOR GUIDELINES

1. Silk Farm Wildlife Sanctuary is open throughout the year during daylight hours.
2. Only foot travel is permitted in the sanctuary. No bicycles or motor vehicles are allowed.
3. Smoking, swimming, camping, fires, hunting, firearms, and trapping are prohibited.
4. Please stay on the marked trails and do not collect or in any way disturb plants or animals.
5. No pets are allowed in the sanctuary.
6. Please carry out all trash and litter.
7. Some terrain can be rough and wet, so sturdy footwear should be worn.

ABOUT NH AUDUBON

New Hampshire Audubon is an independent, statewide, membership-based organization whose mission is to protect New Hampshire's natural environment for wildlife and for people. It operates nature centers throughout the state that provide educational programs for children and adults; oversees research projects, from developing a plan to preserve the biodiversity of a rapidly growing state to monitoring many of New Hampshire's endangered species; protects thousands of acres of wildlife habitat through its sanctuaries program; and advocates for sound public policy on environmental issues.

For more information, contact:

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nhaudubon.org

TRAIL GUIDE

Silk Farm Wildlife Sanctuary



Concord, New Hampshire

A LITTLE HISTORY...

The Silk Farm Wildlife Sanctuary came into existence in the 1970's when NH Audubon acquired 15 acres of land and a small farmhouse on Silk Farm Road. The house became the state headquarters and visitor center for the organization, expanding twice to become the current McLane Center. Some of the land in the sanctuary is owned by St. Paul's School, who granted NH Audubon license to use the land for trails, wildlife management, and nature study.

As evidenced by the stone walls along some of the trails, much of the land the sanctuary now occupies was once cleared and used for farming. In fact, the sanctuary takes its name from a silk farm that operated very near here back in the 1830's. Mulberry trees (host for silkworm caterpillars) were planted and silk was produced for a few years before the project was abandoned. In more recent years, local farmers have used the fields adjacent to the Old Orchard Trail to graze their cattle. If you visit the sanctuary during the late spring or summer, you may see Scottish Highland or other cattle in the fields.

Great Turkey Pond, along whose shoreline the Great Turkey Pond and West End Farm Trails pass, also has an interesting history. One of the larger ponds in Concord, it was used in the 1940's to store some of the many white pine logs from trees felled by the hurricane of 1938. Two temporary sawmills were constructed on the shore of the pond to cut the logs into lumber. One of these sawmills was situated just beyond the

junction of the Old Orchard Trail and the West End Farm Trail and was run by a group of women from the Concord area. Their story is told in the book *They Sawed Up a Storm* by Sarah Smith (Jetty House, 2010), available in the McLane Center Nature Store.



WEST END FARM TRAIL

A portion of the Great Turkey Pond Trail coincides with the southern end of the West End Farm Trail. The latter trail is part of the City of Concord trail system and extends 7.25 miles from NH Audubon to Carter Hill Orchard. Among the locations that this trail traverses are Dimond Hill Farm and Rossvie Farm.

To extend a hike beyond the NH Audubon trail system, the West End Farm Trail can be hiked to a connecting trail to the Bike Path with a return to the McLane Center via Silk Farm Road. A map of the West End Farm Trail can be found on the City of Concord website at: <http://www.concordnh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1263>.

TRAIL INFORMATION

WENDY'S LOOP

Red Markers

0.4 miles loop, easy—20 minutes

Wendy's Loop is a short and relatively easy walk that begins behind the McLane building by the raptor mews. It loops around a treehouse and campfire circle popular with day camps, and through a recently-harvested pine forest before returning to the parking lot and building. The trail is named in memory of former NH Audubon naturalist and educator, Wendy Schorr. Wildflowers found along the trail in spring include Pink Lady's Slipper, Starflower, Canada Mayflower, and Fringed Polygala. Near the kiosk is a vernal pool that is full of Wood Frogs in spring. This trail also serves as trailhead for the West End Farm Trail, running through Concord's west end over 7 miles to its end at Carter Hill Orchard.

GREAT TURKEY POND LOOP

Yellow Markers

1.2 mile loop, moderate—1 hour

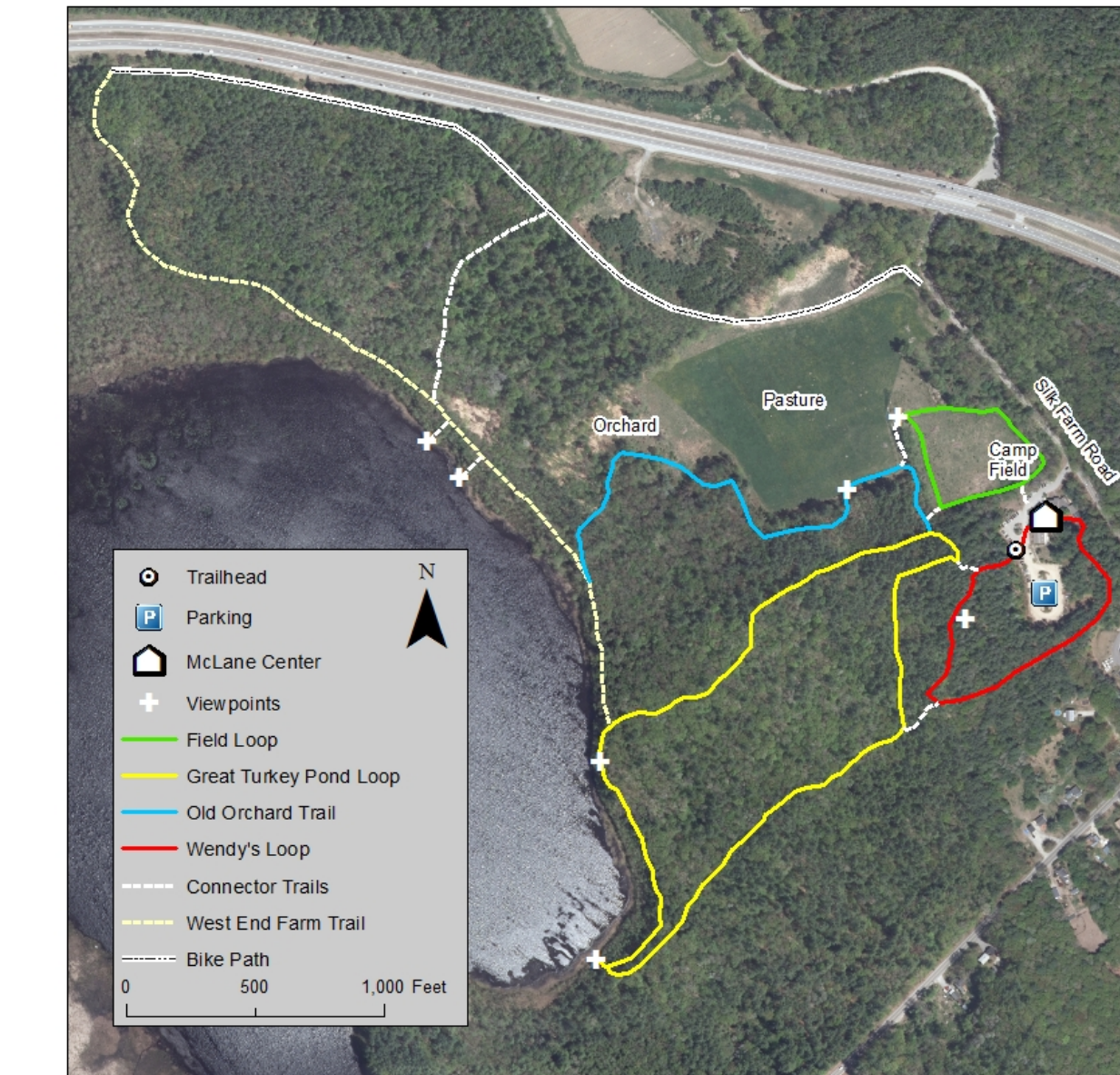
Great Turkey Pond Loop takes you on a varied walk of mixed forest types to Great Turkey Pond. Access the yellow trail from the trailhead and kiosk past Wendy's Loop. The blazed yellow will set you on the path to the Pond, passing through pine and hardwood forests with a variety of tree species and understory vegetation. Two viewpoints along the shore provide easy observation of much of the pond and its resident and migratory bird life. At least 60 species of breeding birds have been found here (a bird checklist is available at the center). From the boardwalk, follow the trail back to the McLane Center. For a longer loop, continue on the West End Farm Trail, which connects with the Bike Path and back to the center along Silk Farm Road.

OLD ORCHARD TRAIL

Blue Markers

0.7 miles, easy—30 minutes each way

Old Orchard trail takes you through several habitat types, making it the best trail for birdwatching—especially during spring and fall migration.



From the trailhead, continue past the Great Turkey Pond Loop to a blue-blazed trail that enters an open 'patch cut' made to benefit shrubland wildlife species. NH Audubon teamed up with St. Paul's School and the American Chestnut Foundation to plant a small chestnut orchard in the cut, which can be observed from the trail. Next, the trail offers a viewpoint of the large pasture, sometimes full of cattle and also home to grassland nesting Bobolinks. Leading back into a maturing forest, the trail

eventually winds its way into an old apple orchard where butterflies and birds abound during the warmer months. The trail gradually descends and reaches the edge of Great Turkey Pond along the West End Farm Trail. To return to the center, make a left and follow the yellow-blazed Great Turkey Pond Loop. Or, continue to the right to reach the location of a historic women-run sawmill site that is now evidenced by two raised 'landings' jutting out into the pond providing excellent viewpoints. A loop can be made by taking a connector trail to the Bike Path and walking back to the center via Silk Farm Road.

FIELD LOOP

Mowed but unmarked

0.4-miles, easy—15 minutes

This short, mowed loop path can be accessed from the Camp Field and allows close views of nesting bluebirds and tree swallows, abundant pollinators, a bat nesting structure, and cattle during summer. It is heavily used by day campers and for various events. You can join the Old Orchard Trail from two short trail connectors to extend your hike, passing evidence of the old agricultural history of the property, which includes a silo foundation and stone walls.

WEST END FARM TRAIL

Yellow Diamonds

7.25 miles, moderate to difficult hiking—allow half to a full day



See description on reverse side of guide.