

YOUR GUIDE TO THE SHARON LAND TRUST TRAILS



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With more than 800 acres of land open to public use, the Sharon Land Trust hosts some of the best hiking in Litchfield County—if not the best hiking in Connecticut! With picturesque views, lush forests, flowering shrubs and wildlife of all types, our trails are worth a special visit. Difficulty levels range from easy to moderate (with a few good uphill hikes, too!). Here's your guide to them all...

Go to sharonlandtrust.org for detailed maps and directions to trails.



VON AHN PRESERVE 276 MILLERTON ROAD

This beautiful property captures the complex, steep southwestern face of Indian Mountain, and is contiguous with the Goodbody Preserve. It is a mosaic of farmland, forest, ridgeline, and wetland that supports wildlife species including black bear, porcupine, coyote, timber rattlesnake, and more than 30 species of birds. There are 26 acres of active farm fields with stunning views of Indian Lake and the Millerton Valley. The trail system climbs up to and across the ridgeline and includes a rocky ridge view. Benches at both field and ridge views provide a welcome resting spot for both the casual walker or more strenuous hiker. The connector trail on the southeast edge of the trail loop connects to the Goodbody Preserve's trail system.

HIDDEN GEMS: A short mini trail at the northern end of the ridge allows hikers to choose between another beautiful view of Indian Lake or a walk beside a mountaintop wetland.

BEST FOR: Energetic hikers who want to explore this fantastic ridgeline.

FAVORITE SECRET SPOT: A small waterfall and stream at the northernmost part of the loop!

GARRETT GOODBODY PRESERVE 140 MILLERTON ROAD

This preserve lies on the southern reach of Indian Mountain, and connects acres of lush farmland to one of the highest elevations on Indian Mountain. Three separate viewpoints can be found along the trail—Sharon Valley, Millerton Valley, and Mudge Pond—each one featuring a bench where you can rest and take in some truly spectacular views. Between those points lies a highly intact forest that's a habitat for a multitude of local birds. The connector trail near the Mudge Pond view connects this to the VonAhn Preserve to the north.

BEST FOR: Those looking for some exercise, great views and a hike that can range from one to three hours long.

FAVORITE SECRET SPOT: Look for the rough-cut cedar log bench along the switchbacks at the southwest side of the loop trail: it was made for one special volunteer who loves native timber.





SHARON MOUNTAIN PRESERVE

189 EAST STREET

Nestled between two ridges, this secluded property contains a beautiful loop trail around a bog that teems with flora and fauna. As you cross the 100-foot long bog bridge, keep an eye out for wood ducks and turtles and listen to the call of frogs and toads. Whether you enter from East Street, Bowne Road, or Tichnor Road, you will find pristine rambling streams, hardwood forest stands, rocky hills covered in mountain laurel, plus old charcoal pits and stone walls from hundreds of years ago. The trail system has been maintained to equestrian standards, and is open year-round to horses.

BEST FOR: Family-friendly hikes and those who like peace and quiet.

FAVORITE SECRET SPOT: The Bowne Road spur trail, accessible from an alternate parking spot at 201 Bowne Road, is the best place to enjoy ephemeral flowers in the spring while hiking beside the streams.

BEST VIEWPOINT: A memorial bench at the intersection of the Bowne Road spur trail offers dappled views into the wetland.

TWIN OAKS PRESERVE

32 MUDGETOWN ROAD

The Twin Oaks field was bought by the Sharon Land Trust in 1998, after it was threatened with development. The hill held two oaks that had graced the landscape since before the American Revolution. In 2013, the first oak fell, and its twin followed soon after. So the Land Trust planted two 28-foot white oaks in the field to serve as a memorial to its rich history, and the Millbrook Garden Club donated entrance gates sculpted of wood from the fallen trees. A favorite among dog owners, the preserve features a 1-mile perimeter loop trail around the field, offering outstanding views of Red Mountain and its foothills. Several tribute benches have been installed, so it's a prime spot to bring a picnic!

DON'T MISS: A marvelous native plant landscape around the parking area includes a memorial bench that's perfect for a quick break to wait for friends.

BEST FOR: Relaxed morning or evening hikes with family, friends, and pups! The sunset views are particularly amazing here.

FAVORITE SECRET SPOT: A tiny spur trail on the lower northeastern side of the loop trail leads into the forest to a stream and small waterfall, perfect for giving your dog some water on a hot day.



SKIFF MOUNTAIN NORTH PRESERVE

583 SKIFF MOUNTAIN ROAD

This preserve is at the southern end of Sharon, bordering Kent, and it features an easy-to-hike loop trail through a variety of habitats. While it is predominantly forested, it also encompasses lush fields and wetlands, including the Pine Swamp, which hosts a rare red spruce community that's considered to be one of Connecticut's critical habitats! Skiff Mountain is also home to rare plants and wildlife species, including an impressive and diverse group of forest birds. The trail system has been maintained to equestrian standards, and is open year-round to horses.

HIDDEN GEMS: An interior field nestled at the center of the property hosts abundant wildlife.

AMAZING FOR: Short family hikes for adventurers of all levels!



BUCKSBAUM PRESERVE

ON LAMBERT ROAD

¼ mile east of the intersection with Amenia Union Rd, (Route 41). This lovely preserve has an easy trail that meanders through field and forest and offers scenic views of the western Taconics and Catskills. In fact, the Bucksbaum preserve includes more than 1,800 feet of stream corridor in the Mill Brook watershed, and the preservation of the land has ensured that the excellent water quality of the stream is maintained for future generations.

BEAR IN MIND: The trails here are less maintained than other preserves, and parking can be muddy and difficult to access during winter and early spring.

BEST VIEWPOINT: You'll catch stunning vistas of the farmland-studded valley from the northeastern corner of the loop trail.

COMING SOON: We are working on a trail to take the public to a beautiful stream and waterfalls at the northern border!



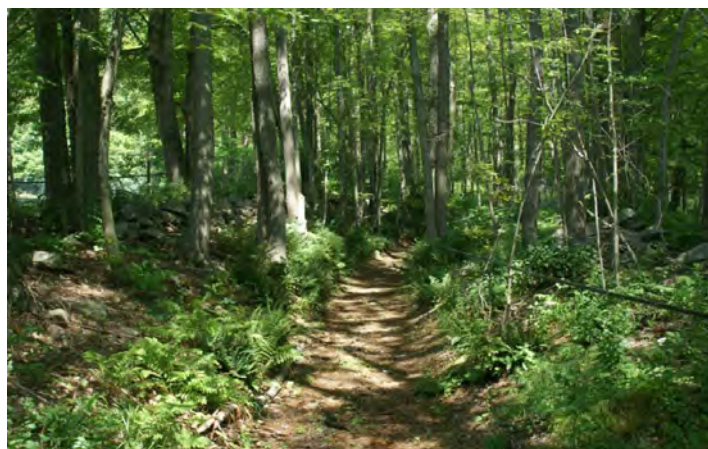
BENTON HILL PRESERVE

40 BENTON HILL ROAD

Benton Hill offers a loop trail through an ecosystem that's home to many rare and protected plant and animal species. From the parking area, you'll be greeted with an incredible view of the southern half of Indian Mountain. This parcel is part of the larger Benton Hill Fen, which is the habitat of many birds including the American bald eagle, and it's also one of only three Connecticut fens that support the endangered bog turtle! The preserve also contains sun-dappled fields that have been designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance. Don't miss the loop trail around a small hidden pond—it is, in fact, an old cattle pond from when the land was a farm, over a century ago. A spur trail at the intersection of Route 343 connects with the main loop, offering hikers the chance to hike to Paley's Farm Market nearby.

DON'T MISS: Aedin's Perch, a memorial bench looking over a mini waterfall at the bottom of the main loop trail, and Jake's bench on the pond loop trail, which is named in honor of one of our most devoted volunteers.

BEST VIEWPOINT: A memorial bench by the parking area, which is great for a quick lunch break and offers terrific views looking toward Indian Mountain.



WIKE BROTHERS FARM

38 WHITE HOLLOW ROAD

One of Sharon's oldest and largest family farms, Wike Brothers Farm has been owned and worked by the same family for seven generations. The historic 268-acre property has evolved from a dairy to a diversified operation that supports free-range chickens, pigs, and grass-fed cattle. As part of the Red Mountain trail system, Wike Brothers connects Hamlin Preserve to Mary Moore Preserve via a roughly half-mile passage.

Please note: There is a small parking area on White Hollow Road, but we suggest you access this trail from either the Hamlin Preserve or the Mary Moore Preserve.

HIDDEN GEMS: Many of the rocky outcrops along the steep hillside are great sitting spots to take a break and listen to the animal sounds from the farm below.

BEST VIEWPOINT: There are incredible vistas along the steep mountainside trail during the early spring and late fall when the leaves are off the trees.



MARY MOORE PRESERVE

24 WILLIAMS ROAD

One of our most popular and special properties, Mary Moore Preserve sits on the southwestern reach of the Red Mountain range. It has nearly 3 miles of trails through farm fields, forests, and boulder fields, and offers options for both easy and moderate hikes. The short climb to the lookout offers one of the best vistas in the Berkshires, with a view that encompasses three states (and benches so you can take a rest!). The loop around the cliff trail features dramatic, moss-covered boulder fields and the State Champion Chinkapin Oak. The Mary Moore trails are part of the Red Mountain trail system, which connects via the Wike Brothers Farm and continues to the Hamlin Preserve, allowing for a longer hike that traverses all three properties.

HIDDEN GEM: A large boulder set high atop the mountain edge of the cliff trail offers a perfect spot to take a break and enjoy views of the forest floor hundreds of feet below.

FAVORITE SECRET SPOT: The magical vernal pool at the northern intersection of the cliff trail is a special sight in spring or after a good long rainstorm.

BEST VIEWPOINTS: The upper field view and its benches, recently named one of the best views in the northeast!



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HAMLIN PRESERVE

19 STONE HOUSE ROAD

Winding along the forest edge to the beautiful upper reaches of Red Mountain, this property allows you to journey through rock formations, over a headwaters stream, and along four lovely vernal pools. The northern end of the trail starts at the trailhead at Stone House Road, passing by the fields of Lion Rock Farm and crossing into the woods. It goes over a stream and then follows the old Stone House Road up Red Mountain. As you climb, you'll get to an intersection where the Ledge Loop trail meets the main trail. The Ledge Loop trail will take you along the ridgeline of Hamlin and then back—so you can return to your vehicle at Stone House Road, or keep on going to the Wike Brothers Farm connector trail, which then leads further on to the Mary Moore Preserve.

DON'T MISS: A beautifully crafted stream bridge close to the parking area provides a great spot to sit and enjoy the burbling sounds of water (and let your dog cool off!).

FAVORITE SECRET SPOT: Both the ledge loop stream, fed by mountain springs, and its five trailside vernal pools, are an amazing sight in the spring.

BE SURE TO NOTICE: Forest glades along the ridge, with wild native grasses below and huge white oaks above.



THE D'ALTON PRESERVE

101 WESTWOODS ROAD #2

The trails on the D'Alton Preserve take you through wooded hills and valleys, wetlands and streams. Hike to a 1,414-foot summit, where you'll find a bench and terrific long-distance views to the Catskill Range in New York and the Riga-Everett Range in Massachusetts. Lower down, the bog view provides a great spot to watch for ducks, beaver, and other wetland-dependent animals. Look out for bedrock outcroppings, unique geologic formations which have thin soils and can host rare plant species. The trail system has been maintained to equestrian standards, and is open year-round to horses.

HIDDEN GEMS: Streams along the western side of the inner loop trail are magical in the spring, and benches at the bog and summit are great for relaxing breaks.

DID YOU KNOW: The wide trails make for great snowshoeing and cross-country skiing terrain in the winter.

