

# WELCOME TO THE SHARON LAND TRUST TRAILS!



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**W**ith more than 1,400 acres of land open to public use, the Sharon Land Trust hosts some of the best hiking in Litchfield County (and even Connecticut!). Here's your guide to them all...

Go to [sharonlandtrust.org](http://sharonlandtrust.org) for detailed maps and directions to trails on each of our Preserves.



## VON AHN PRESERVE

### 276 MILLERTON ROAD

This beautiful property includes 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, 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 the more ambitious hiker. The connector trail on the southeast edge of the trail loop connects to the Goodbody Preserve's trail system and is great for spotting raptors overhead.

**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 are up for a good cardio workout.

**FAVORITE SECRET SPOT:** A small waterfall and stream at the northernmost part of the loop. Look for orange newts, water skater bugs, and millipedes, or let your kids and dogs dip their feet on a hot day.

**COMING SOON:** A new spur trail that will connect the trail system to the Town Beach!

## GARRETT GOODBODY PRESERVE

### 140 MILLERTON ROAD

This preserve lies on the southern reach of Indian Mountain and connects acres of active farmland to one of the highest elevations on Indian Mountain. Three separate benches can be found along the trail—overlooking Sharon Valley, Millerton Valley, and Mudge Pond—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. Kids can chase butterflies, moths, and grasshoppers along the field edges on the way to and from the forest. The connector trail near the Mudge Pond view connects this to the Von Ahn Preserve to the north, and brings hikers through a rock shale covered in unique and ancient reindeer lichen. The lichen is very fragile, so be sure to stay on the trail to keep it safe.

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

**DON'T MISS:** A beautiful and shady hemlock stand with bubbling streams on the eastern side of the loop. Dogs can have a cool drink while little ones look for amphibians and crawly creatures on the forest floor.







## 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, you'll be surrounded by a vibrant wetland—a perfect place to watch for wood ducks, bald eagles, 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. These micro-ecosystems are great for kids and adults alike to discover a variety of flowers, mosses, fungi, and animal species along the trail. The trails are maintained to equestrian standards and are open year-round to horses.

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

**FAVORITE SECRET SPOT:** The section of trail off of Tichnor Road has a remarkable number of woodpecker species. Listen for their rapping and keep an eye out for pileated woodpeckers, yellow-bellied sap suckers, and the adorable little downy woodpeckers.

**BEST VIEWPOINT:** A bench at the intersection of the Bowne Road spur trail offers 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. In 2016, the Land Trust planted two 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 one-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. The sunsets are particularly amazing. Energetic walkers and kids can race to the top and catch their breath at the upper bench with a view.

**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 letting your dog cool off on a hot day.



### 583 SKIFF MOUNTAIN ROAD

Located at the southern end of Sharon, bordering Kent, it features an easy-to-hike loop trail through a variety of habitats. Predominantly forested, it also has lush fields and wetlands, including the Pine Swamp, which hosts a red spruce community that's considered to be one of Connecticut's critical habitats! It's also home to other rare plants and wildlife, including an impressive group of forest birds such as broad-winged hawks, a variety of warblers and wrens, and the elusive scarlet tanager. The trail system is maintained to equestrian standards and open year-round to horses.

**HIDDEN GEM:** Watch for deer, butterflies, owls, and other wildlife in the interior field!

**BEST FOR:** Short family hikes for adventurers of all levels, quiet walks, or trail runs.



## SKIFF MOUNTAIN NORTH PRESERVE



## LAMBERT ROAD

*¼ mile east of the intersection with Amenia Union Rd, (Route 41).*

This easy trail meanders through field and forest, offering scenic views of the western Taconics and Catskills. You'll pass through hardwood stands, across hilltops, farmland, and streams. The preserve includes more than 1,800 feet of stream corridor, protecting the water quality of the Mill Brook for future generations. Kids can spot frogs and salamanders near the burbling stream on the northwestern edge of the preserve while you rest on a bench overlooking beautiful views of cow-studded farmland and distant hills.

**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.

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

## BUCKSBAUM PRESERVE



## 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 Indian Mountain. Part of the Benton Hill Fen, the preserve supports birds like the American bald eagle and is one of only three Connecticut fens that host the endangered bog turtle! Don't miss the loop trail around a small hidden pond—an old cattle pond from when the land was a farm, more than 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:** Stop by Jake's Bench, named for one of our most dedicated volunteers, for a quiet moment or a snack break. Further along, Aedin's Perch overlooks a mini waterfall and is a favorite spot for kids to explore.

**BEST VIEWPOINT:** A memorial bench by the parking area, with a terrific vista looking toward Indian Mountain.



## THE D'ALTON PRESERVE

### 101 WESTWOODS ROAD #2

The trails wind through wooded hills and valleys, wetlands and streams, leading to a 1,414-foot summit with a bench and vistas of the Catskills and the Riga-Everett Range. Lower down, the bog view provides a great spot to watch for ducks, beavers, and other wetland wildlife. Look out for bedrock outcroppings, thin soiled geologic formations that can host rare plants. The trails are maintained to equestrian standards and open year-round to horses.

**HIDDEN GEMS:** In the late spring/early summer, the inner loop comes alive with blooming mountain laurel. The bench at the bog is a great place to take a break, look for ducks and listen for frogs.

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

**BEST FOR:** Hikers looking for a quiet and relaxing walk through the woods. The outer and inner loops can be made into a hike as long or as short as you'd like.





# MARY MOORE PRESERVE

## 24 WILLIAMS ROAD

One of our most popular properties, Mary Moore Preserve sits on the southwestern reach of the Red Mountain range. It has nearly three miles of trails, with both easy and moderate options. The short climb to the lookout offers one of the best vistas of 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. These 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.

**DON'T MISS:** Greet the curious cows along the fence line at the start and end of your hike.

**FAVORITE SECRET SPOT:** The magical vernal pool at the northern intersection of the cliff trail is a great spot to hear peepers in the spring (just be sure you leave yourself enough time to get back to the trailhead by dark).

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



## 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 headwater stream, and along vernal pools. The northern end of the trail starts at Stone House Road, passing by the fields of Lion Rock Farm, and the state champion Common Apple tree in the fields before entering the woods. The trail crosses a stream and follows the old Stone House Road up Red Mountain. As you climb, you'll hit an intersection where the Ledge Loop trail meets the main trail. This offers lovely views of the farmland below and will take you along the ridgeline of Hamlin and back. From there, you can either return to Stone House Road or continue through the Wike Brothers Farm connector to Mary Moore.

**DON'T MISS:** A beautifully crafted stream bridge close to the parking area provides a great spot to sit and enjoy the bubbling 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 spring, with wildflowers, the broad leaves of skunk cabbage and false hellebore, and toads and frogs taking refuge in the cool water.

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

## 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, the Wike Brothers Farm easement connects Hamlin Preserve to Mary Moore Preserve via a roughly half-mile passage. *Please note: Best accessed via the Hamlin or Mary Moore Preserves; limited parking on White Hollow Rd.*

**HIDDEN GEMS:** Many of the rocky outcrops along the steep hillside are perfect for taking a break and listening to the sounds of the animals from the farm below.

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

