Table of Contents

Preface
Trail Etiquette ................................................................................................................. 2
Location Map of Trails and Launches................................................................. 3-4

Trails
1 Ayers Preserve.......................................................................................................................... 5-6
2 Babcock Pond Wildlife Management Area ................................................................. 7-8
3 Ballahack Preserve ............................................................................................................. 9-10
4 Burnham Brook Preserve ............................................................................................... 11-12
5 Chapal Farm – Patrell Parcel ......................................................................................... 13-14
6 Chapman Pond Preserve .................................................................................................... 15-16
7 Devil’s Hopyard State Park .............................................................................................. 17-18
8 Gillette Castle State Park ................................................................................................. 19-20
9 Harlo N. Haagenson Preserve ......................................................................................... 21-22
10 Machimoodus State Park ................................................................................................. 23-24
11 Nichols Field ..................................................................................................................... 25-26
12 Olde Field Preserve ......................................................................................................... 27-28
13 Sheepskin Hollow Preserve ............................................................................................ 29-30
14 Urbanik Preserve ........................................................................................................... 31-32
15 William Jezek Memorial Preserve .................................................................................. 33-34

Canoe/kayak launches
16 Upper/Lower Moodus River ......................................................................................... 35
17 Bashan Lake .................................................................................................................... 35
18 Salmon River .................................................................................................................. 35
19 Goodspeed Landing ....................................................................................................... 35
20 Lake Hayward ............................................................................................................... 36

List of organizations .......................................................................................................... 37-38
Preface

A Message from East Haddam First Selectman

Slow but sure. Today we can cover 60 miles in one hour by car. Planes move along at 600 miles per hour. But on foot, to hike 15 miles in a day is a great accomplishment! Is “faster” always better?

Welcome to exploring East Haddam’s trails and waterways. The East Haddam Trail guide will undoubtedly open your eyes, heart and soul to the true wonders of our special town. We hope that exploring what nature has to offer through hiking and boating will be a refreshing and rejuvenating experience. With your help we can protect our town’s outdoor treasures and spread the word about the natural wonders available to us all.

Mark B. Walter
First Selectman

Welcome from the East Haddam Conservation Commission

We are delighted to present the second edition of the East Haddam Trail Guide first published in 2003. This edition includes several additional properties and a listing of canoe and kayak launches. We are proud of our town’s plentiful natural resources and encourage you to experience them first hand!

We extend special thanks to our East Haddam Land Trust collaborators, Rob Smith and Shannon Goyette. We appreciate Claire Maeder for her contribution to the design and publication of this guide. We are grateful to local artist, Carrie Capizzano, who created the Conservation Commission logo for this edition.

Cynthia Matthew
Chairwoman

July 2011
Trail Etiquette

In addition to town-owned open space parcels, properties described in this brochure are owned by private conservation organizations including The Nature Conservancy (TNC), East Haddam Land Trust (EHLT), and Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS). Please observe all posted property rules and regulations. Stay on trails, and avoid trespassing on adjacent land. Do not tamper with or disturb wildlife or their habitat. Do not remove any natural resource such as tree wood, plants, minerals or wildlife. Keep pets on leash. Do not litter, start fires, discharge firearms/fireworks, play music or make loud noise. Motorized vehicles, trail bikes and alcohol use are prohibited. Keep children and pets under close watch. Please report any problems to town officials or the police as appropriate. During fall and early winter, hunting is permitted on certain properties, consistent with state regulations. For more information, please call the Town of East Haddam Land Use Office, 860-873-5031.
1. Ayers
2. Babcock Pond
3. Ballahack
4. Burnham Brook
5. Chapal Farm - Patrell
6. Chapman Pond
9. Harlo Haagenson  15. William Jezek
10. Machimoodus  16 a & b Moodus Reservoir Launches
11. Nichols  17. Bashan Lake Launch
12. Olde Field  18. Salmon River Launch
1 Ayers Preserve

Easy walking, 1 hour or less. Can be wet depending on recent rainfall.

The 6-acre Ayers Preserve was donated to the Land Trust in 2002. The entire preserve is in the flood-plain of the Eightmile River and spring floods periodically inundate it. As this property was once a pasture and later a Christmas tree plantation, you will see not only grassy areas along the river but cedar and spruce trees that now reach 20 to 30 feet in height. The spruce trees have created dense shade, which has eliminated most vegetation except for the tangle of naked limbs. Swamp maples dominate the wetter hollows. An occasional giant grapevine can be seen along the trail as well as the invasive bittersweet and its vines. In many locations, there are colonies of Royal, Cinnamon and New York ferns.

This six-acre parcel is located on the east side of Hopyard Road about 3/4 miles north of Route 82. A loop trail starts at the road and leads you down to the Eightmile River. The trail is about 2000 feet long. The 300 feet on the river is opposite protected land of The Nature Conservancy.
Babcock Pond, a State Wildlife Management Area (WMA), is a 1,524-acre tract of wild land straddling the East Haddam and Colchester border. The State of Connecticut purchased the land from the Middlesex Corporation in September 1992, using funds from the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program. This magnificent property is bounded on the north by Route 16, on the west by Route 149 and Mott Lane, on the south by East Haddam-Colchester Turnpike, and on the east by Wickham Road and Miles Standish Road. The Colchester access point has handicapped access to trails and a bird blind. Trails off Miles Standish Road provide an opportunity for cross-country skiing. Access from the East Haddam side is off of Starr Road, Wickham Road and East Haddam-Colchester Turnpike east of Moodus Reservoir.

From Town Street (Route 151), turn east onto East Haddam-Colchester Turnpike. Continue about 3 miles to Starr Road on your left or proceed another 1/4 mile farther to the gate off of Olmsted Road. There is limited parking available at either road; be careful of deep ditches along the road. Another parking lot is available at the entrance to Babcock Pond – proceed on Route 16 for about 1 mile east of the junction of Routes 149 and 16. The entrance is on the right-hand side. Another option is to continue on Route 16 for 1/4 mile east of the parking area, turning right and parking on Miles Standish Road.
3 Ballahack Preserve

Easy to moderate walking, 1 hour or less. Mature forests and mountain laurel groves.

The eleven-acre Ballahack Preserve was donated to the Land Trust in the early 1990s. This relatively narrow preserve is best accessed from the turnaround at the end of Ballahack Road Extension. A .5-mile long trail connects Ballahack with Lake Shore Drive. Portions of the trail follow an old woods road. The trail winds through mature hardwoods, mountain laurel groves, side slopes and over knobs of ledge and moss. The trail has mostly gentle grades interspersed with short steep sections. Intermittent streams tumble down through the preserve in spring and the mountain laurel is lovely in June. Witch hazel can be seen blossoming in the fall.

From Route 82, go east on Mt. Parnassus approx. 3 miles to the fourth left, Schulman-Veselak Road. Go approximately 3/4 mile and take a left onto Ballahack Road. Take next left onto Ballahack Rd. Extension. Park in cul-de-sac at bottom of hill.
4 Burnham Brook Preserve

Moderate walking, two hours. Rugged slopes, a tumbling brook, wild and scenic terrain.

The Nature Conservancy’s Burnham Brook Preserve consists of approximately 1100 acres. Additional acres are protected by the East Haddam Land Trust’s Hammond Mill Preserve and the State of Connecticut’s Devil’s Hopyard State Park, totaling over 2000 acres of contiguous protected land. Certain species of birds, such as the Cerulean Warbler, Yellow-Throated Vireo and Hermit Thrush (all found on the preserve) require these large tracts of unbroken forest to breed.

Follow Route 82, turning left onto Woodbridge Road in Salem. Woodbridge turns into West Road. Go approximately 1/2 mile and turn left onto Dolbia Hill Road. Follow Dolbia Hill Road until you see the preserve sign on your right.

Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.

John Muir
5 Chapal Farm – Patrell Parcel

Easy walking, 1-2 hours possible. Diverse landscape – meadows, forests, and river bank. Ice-age geologic features – eskers and kettle ponds. Trails offer easy viewing and access to the banks of the Eightmile River.

This beautiful area was purchased through a conservation partnership (Lyme Land Conservation Trust, East Haddam Land Trust, Town of East Haddam, Town of Lyme, The Nature Conservancy) to protect the Eightmile River watershed, now part of The National Wild and Scenic River System. There is approximately 1/2 mile of river frontage in the preserve. Trails offer diverse landscapes with views of glacial features. One trail uses an esker to traverse the landscape.

From the junction of Routes 82 and 156, turn onto Route 156. Follow about 1/2 mile to Baker Lane, located on the left. Follow to the entrance, about 1/3 of a mile on the left. Entrance and parking is to the left of the house driveway. The trail begins in the meadow – look for red or yellow trail markers. For individuals with a mobility impairment, this preserve also has a paved loop (starting at the parking area) that provides access to the preserve and the Eightmile River.
Moderate walking, several hours are possible. Large tract, forested hillside with enough room to get lost.

Chapman Pond is a 60-acre tidal pond located in the heart of a 700-acre preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy, the State of Connecticut and the East Haddam Land Trust. Chapman Pond is home to over 200 plant species, several of which are classified as rare in Connecticut. In winter, the trees along the western edge of the pond provide roosting for Bald Eagles. In spring and summer, the pond provides a feeding area for osprey. It is common to spot a few fishermen working the pond for pickerel, pike, carp, bass and perch. Kingfishers can be seen rushing noisily from tree to tree. The pond itself can only be accessed from the Connecticut River, but there is good hiking in the woods above the water.

From the junction of Routes 82 and 151, follow Route 82 south 1 mile. Turn right onto River Road. Entrance to the Preserve is just before the large yellow road sign with a left arrow on it. Turn right just before the yellow road sign. Parking is limited to 2 or 3 vehicles. Road can have very deep ruts so use caution. The trail begins just beyond the parking spaces.
7 Devil’s Hopyard State Park

Steep and rocky areas, moderate walking, several hours are possible. Campground, picnicking, fireplaces, shelter and miles of hiking trails. Several parking lots near picnic areas and a spectacular waterfall.

Devil’s Hopyard has been a popular state park since 1919. The highlights of the park include the 60 foot drop of Chapman Falls, several vistas and giant hemlocks (alas, many have died). Lush foliage is visible throughout the park with ferns such as Christmas, Cinnamon, Beech, and New York on regular display. The woods are filled with hemlock, oak, black birch and hickory trees. A complete trail map is displayed at several locations. Hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing and biking are popular here. Other trailheads are off Mitchell Road, at the pond, and on top of the hill.

Hopyard Road is located between Route 82 and Mount Parnassus Road. From the junction of Routes 82 and 156, follow Route 82 east 1/4 mile. Turn left onto Hopyard Road. The park entrance is 3 miles north on the right. Mitchell Road is on the left about 2 miles from Route 82. A detailed map of Devil’s Hopyard State Park can be found at the Connecticut DEP web site or at www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/stateparks/maps/devilshopyard.pdf.
The hiking trails at Devil's Hopyard State Park are foot travel only.
8 Gillette Castle State Park

Moderate walking, several hours. 125-acre state park with hiking trails, picnic facilities, fishing areas and the newly-renovated stone castle.

The castle is located high on cliffs that overlook the Connecticut River and the famous Hadlyme Ferry, offering a spectacular view of the lower Connecticut River Valley. For an admission fee, visitors can tour the fascinating architecture of the 24-room castle built of stone and hand-carved timbers. The castle was built (1915-1919) by actor William Gillette for over $1 million. The grounds surrounding the castle include a visitor center, hiking trails and picnic facilities all accessed by a well-maintained, gently curving road. One of the trails leads to the Connecticut River where fresh water fishing is available. Other trails follow Gillette’s narrow gauge railroad bed over trestles and through a tunnel. In winter, there is good eagle watching from either the castle’s large patio overlooking the river or from the water’s edge.

From the junction of Routes 82 and 151, follow Route 82 south 1 1/4 miles. Turn right onto River Road and follow the signs about 1 1/2 miles to the park entrance. Park near the picnic area or in the large visitors’ lot from the castle. Alternatively, parking is available at the ferry landing parking lot where a trail leads to the park.

A detailed map can be found at Connecticut State DEP website www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/stateparks/maps/gillettecastlemap.pdf
Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.

Lao Tzu
9 Harlo N. Haagenson Preserve

Easy walking, about 1 hour. Open meadow with scenic view of Connecticut and Salmon Rivers, hiking trails, diverse bird and plant habitat, forest, inland wetlands, shrub land.

The Haagenson Preserve is a 65-acre sanctuary located on Creek Row owned by the Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS). The property was donated to CAS in 1989 by the late East Haddam resident Harlo Haagenson, for the purpose of preserving it for public enjoyment. Located in a DEP area of special concern, the preserve is home to Saw-Whet Owls, Pileated Woodpeckers, Ovenbirds and dozens of other interesting bird and plant species. In winter, Bald Eagles visit this quiet upland area on the Connecticut River. Remains of a 19th century mill dam and man-made pond are located on the properties.

From East Haddam Center take Route 149 north 3/4 mile to Landing Hill Rd (at the stop sign) on your right. Take Landing Hill to Creek Row (first left). The Haagenson Preserve is approximately 1/4 mile down Creek Row, on the left. Pull into the access driveway for parking.
KEY

TRAILS
B - Blue (.3 mile)
R - Red
W - White (.75 mile)
Y - Yellow (.4 mile)

V - VIEW POINT
P - PARKING

Harlo N. Haagenson Preserve
Connecticut Audubon Society
60 ACRES

AREA IS OPEN ½ HOUR BEFORE SUNRISE TO ½ HOUR AFTER SUNSET
10 Machimoodus State Park

Easy walking, 1 to 2 hours. Fields, open hardwood forests and dense hemlock forests, man-made ponds and several lookouts offer spectacular views down the Salmon River to the Connecticut River.

This 250-acre park offers pleasant walking over gentle, rolling land with some striking views from hilltops. There is plenty of wildlife, including deer and wild turkey. Bald Eagles roost on the ridge overlooking the Salmon River Cove during the winter. Several small quarries illustrate Connecticut geology (no collecting is allowed without a special state permit). Tread with respect, as a legendary Indian spirit protects the hill called Mt. Tom!

From Moodus Center, take Route 151, Moodus-Leesville Road, west 1 ½ miles. Turn left at the park entrance. A large parking lot is at the end of the entrance/exit road. The trails begin from the parking lot.

A detailed map of Machimoodus State Park can be found at the Connecticut DEP website www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/stateparks/maps/MachimoodusTrailMap.pdf.
The boundaries of State-owned properties as shown on this map are approximate.

The trails at Machimoodus State Park are non-motorized multi-use only.

Trail distances between marks ( ) are in miles.

Funding provided by the Federal Highway Administration Recreational Trails Grants Program administered by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).
11 Nichols Field

Easy walking, 1 - 2 hours. Town property with playing fields, playground and two miles or so of trails throughout the property.

In addition to the public play areas, this site provides easy access to quiet forest where plants and wildlife are easily viewed. A reasonably level walking trail leads to a peninsula extending into Pickerel Lake, winding past dramatic ledges, lush woods and wetlands. The blue trail follows a portion of Pickerel Lake Brook, and other streams are found throughout the forest.

Follow Falls Road (Route 149) east from the center of Moodus about 1 ¾ miles. Just past Trowbridge Road and the sharp curves, the park’s entrance is on the left. Trailhead parking is available on Trowbridge Road, by the transfer station, and at the Athletic field and playground on Route 149.
Nichols Property
Town of East Haddam
120 Acres
AREA IS OPEN ¾ HOUR BEFORE SUNRISE TO ¾ HOUR AFTER SUNSET
NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES
HUNTING BY PERMIT ONLY
Please wear bright orange during the hunting season
12 Olde Field Preserve

Easy walking, about 1 hour. Diverse natural area; wetland abundant with various species of ferns, Sweet Pepper-Bush and other shrubs; field rich with Fragrant Bedstraw surrounded by mature hardwoods.

The East Haddam Land Trust owns this 10-acre preserve. There are over 100 species of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants on the preserve, which makes it a good educational site. Species found include Dwarf Ginseng, Mad Dog Skullcap, Hog Peanut and Enchanter’s Nightshade. Nest boxes have been erected at various locations to attract bluebirds. See if you can find the prickly burrs of an American Chestnut! Parking is limited and since Parker Road is narrow, turning around may be a challenge.

From the intersection of Routes 82 and 151, take Mt. Parnassus Road east about two miles to Parker Road (aka Peter’s Path) on the right. The preserve is about 3/4 of a mile south of Mt. Parnassus on the left side of Parker Road where there is a trailhead sign.
13 Sheepskin Hollow Preserve

Moderate walking, several hours possible. Small waterfalls, pond, rock formations, and varied wildlife.

This 119-acre East Haddam Land Trust property offers a number of interesting walking trails with small waterfalls and rock formations. Barn owls, wild turkey, hawks and deer are prevalent. Beaver, mink, weasels and muskrats can be seen in the pond and along the various waterways. Views of Sheepskin Hollow Pond can be seen on some trails. Future footbridge construction will loop the existing trails with Land Trust property on Sheepskin Hollow Road. The trail system is accessible from Ridgebury Road, which is off Warner Road and Woodmont Circle, and A.P. Gates Road.

From the intersection of Routes 82 and 151, take Mt. Parnassus Rd. east about 3 ½ miles to Warner Rd. Turn right on Warner and follow about 3/4 of a mile to Ridgebury Rd. on right. Follow to end of Ridgebury and park in cul-de-sac. The trailhead is on the right facing south, marked by white blazes between the last two houses and sign.
E

asy walking, 1-2 hours possible. Varied hardwoods (ash, hickories, oaks, maples, birches, beeches, etc); manmade pond, glacial features.

This 86-acre parcel was purchased from the Urbanik family in 2003. The property contains a pond made by the family; this pond is bounded by a causeway/dam at the northern end with an overflow discharge. The grassy dam provides a wonderful southern exposure that is perfect for warming up on winter days or while watching the clouds roll past in early spring. There are two trails on this preserve. The first trail traverses around the pond and the second, made by a local Eagle Scout, winds around the property through the forested area.

Take Mt. Parnassus Road from Route 82, which becomes Millington Road and then Haywardville Road. Turn right on Alexander Road which becomes Foxtown Cemetery Road at Salem Road. The preserve is located where the paved road ends. Park on the side of the road.
Urbanik Preserve
Town of East Haddam
90 Acres
AREA IS OPEN 1/2 HOUR BEFORE SUNRISE TO 1/2 HOUR AFTER SUNSET
NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES
HUNTING BY PERMIT ONLY

Please wear bright orange during the hunting season
15 William Jezek Memorial Preserve

Easy walking, about 1 hour. Wetlands, trails, White-tail Deer habitat, wild turkey and raptors. Access to and views of Moodus Reservoir, connects Beebe Road and Daniel Peck Road.

This 18.5-acre East Haddam Land Trust preserve is located in the middle of a subdivision. A trail system rambles through several wetlands and provides access to the upper Moodus Reservoir. Hiking is the only activity permitted on this fragile wetland wildlife habitat. Please stay on trails to minimize impact and ensure the privacy of the neighboring landowners.

There are trailheads on Beebe Road and Daniel Peck Road. Daniel Peck Road has the safer parking location. Follow Mt. Parnassus Road east to Wickham Road, located on the left. One mile north turn left onto Daniel Peck Road. The Daniel Peck trailhead is approximately 1/4 mile past the intersection with Beebe Road. The Beebe Road access is approximately one mile on the left from Daniel Peck. The Beebe Road trailhead can be reached from the East Haddam-Colchester Turnpike by turning south onto Beebe Road. You may “sign in” at the trailhead box.
Canoe/Kayak Launches

16a Upper Moodus Reservoir
Take Old Colchester Turnpike east from Route 151 (Town Street @ blinking light) approximate 2 1/2 miles to Launching Area Road on right. Go 1/4 mile and launch is on left.

16b Lower Moodus Reservoir
Take Route 149 north from junction of Route 151 approx. two miles. Take a right onto Mott Lane just past reservoir. Boat launch is 1/4 mile on right.

17 Bashan Lake
From Route 82, take Mt Parnassus east approximately 2 1/2 miles. Take a left on Ballahack Rd. and follow to end at launch site. (Note: road turns to gravel and continues as launch area access road)

18 Salmon River
Access to Connecticut River and Salmon River – can be a busy ramp.
Take Route 149 north from its junction with Route 82 in East Haddam village. Salmon River Boat Launch is approximately 1 1/4 miles on the left.

19 Goodspeed Landing
Access to Connecticut River and best access to Chapman’s Pond and Lord and Rich Islands – cartop vessels only. From Route 82 in East Haddam village, take Lumberyard Road south approximately 1/10 mile. Go straight towards airport and take a right just before the airport. Access is a dirt road just beyond Goodspeed parking lot.
20 Lake Hayward
Take Mt Parnassus/Millington Rd./Haywardville Rd. east from Route 82 (approx. 7 miles) to junction with Lake Shore Drive. Go left on Lake Shore and follow around lake (becomes Lake Hayward Rd.) to East Shore Drive on right. Go 1/10 mile on East Shore Dr. Boat ramp is on right.
List of Organizations

East Haddam Conservation Commission

The East Haddam Conservation Commission develops, manages, and regulates natural resources in the town of East Haddam through open space stewardship and land use advisement. For additional information and trail updates visit our website at www.easthaddam.org.

East Haddam Land Trust

The purpose of the East Haddam Land Trust is to preserve and hold in trust natural resources in the town of East Haddam by acquiring natural areas and conservation easements through donations and purchases. For more information visit their website at www.ehlt.org.

The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is an international conservation organization whose mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. For more information visit their website at www.nature.org.

Connecticut Audubon Society

Connecticut Audubon Society conserves Connecticut’s environment through science-based education and advocacy focused on the state’s bird populations and habitats. For more information visit their website at www.ctaudubon.org.
State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) conserves, improves and protects the natural resources and environment of the State of Connecticut. For information about state parks, forests and natural resources visit the website at www.ct.gov.

If one way be better than another, that you may be sure is Nature’s way.

Aristotle