Self Guided Nature Trail

Keep an eye out for the numbered markers you will see along the trails. Match up the numbers to the list below to find out more information about the habitat

❶ **Chrissy's Garden:** The meadow is the garden. Native wildflowers, shrubs and trees add beauty and diversity to the site. Native plants are well adapted to the conditions here and benefit the local ecosystem. Some were in the meadow when the garden was developed and others were planted.

❷ **Grassland Birds:** Bobolinks build their nests in late May or early June in the dense cover of grass and wildflowers. In the fall the small birds make an extraordinary flight of about 6,000 miles to spend the winter in South America.

❸ **Well:** A well exists in the woods. It overflows much of the year because ground water is being pushed to the surface. Many of our homes have ground water wells.

❹ **Stone Walls:** Stone walls crisscross the countryside. Most walls were built by farmers in the early 1800's to contain farm animals and enable cultivation. When you see a stone wall in the woods, this area was probably once a field.

❺ **Woodland Trail:** Look for bloodroot, mayapples, and wild geraniums along with other wildflowers. These woodland gems flower in early to mid spring to attract the first flying insects of the season. Follow the double white diamonds through a beautiful New England hardwood forest across two foot bridges.

❻ **Intermittent Stream:** You will find a stream here only during wet periods. This site is important to wild turkeys because emerging ground water provides a snow free feeding site. Some of the first green plants of spring will be found here.

❼ **Woodland Buffers:** Trees planted as buffers can provide privacy, shade, reduce noise and help protect air and water quality. There are many native shrubs that add beauty to the landscape while providing food for the wildlife.

❽ **Rock Museum:** The bedrock under this site is mostly sandstone and shale. The bedrock is covered by a thick deposit of sandy till left during the last glacial age.

❾ **Rock Outcrop & Mosses:** This bedrock knoll is made from rocks that are about 400 million years old. The rocks provide wildlife cover and den sites. Look for lichens on the rock surfaces. Mosses and club mosses can be seen on the soil surface. The club mosses have true stems and roots; the mosses do not. They produce by spores and seeds. Feel how soft these plants are with your fingers but be careful to keep your feet on the narrow path. Mosses are delicate and grow very slowly.

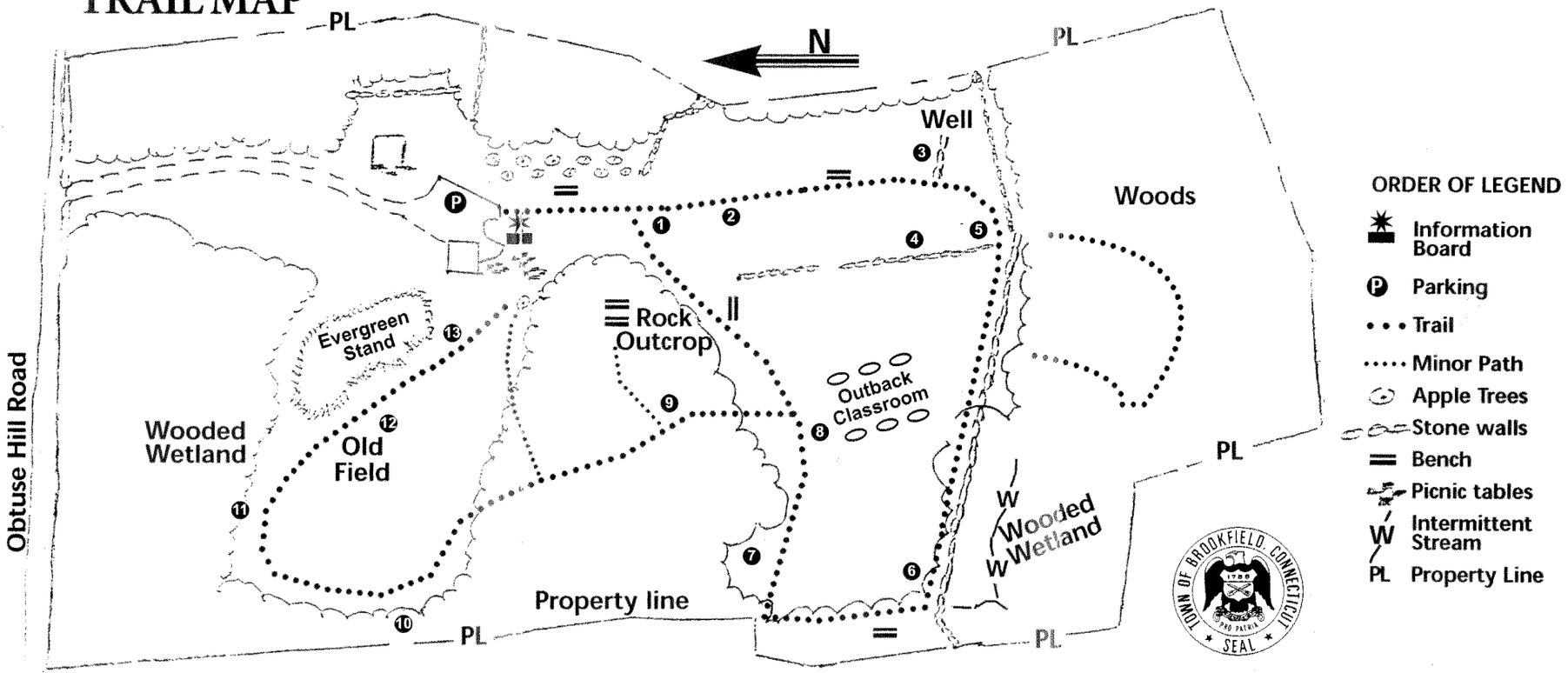
❿ **Norway Spruce:** This large old Norway Spruce has branches that drop downward and hang low to the ground. It is a native of northern and central Europe. There are three other native evergreens found here that are native to this area: Eastern Red Cedar, Canadian Hemlock, and White Pine. Each have needles that are distinct. The spruce needles are four sided and stiff.

⓫ **Woodland Wetland:** This wetland is a transitional area between the dry upland and the brook. The water table is usually at or near the soil surface. This wetland provides homes for salamanders, frogs, turtles, woodcock and songbirds.

⓬ **Old Field:** Birds of prey will watch over this field searching out mice, voles, and other small animals. The mice hide under the thick grass and shrubs.

⓭ **Evergreen Stand:** Norway Spruce provide great cover for wildlife. These evergreens shield wildlife from harsh winter weather. The snow free area under these trees provides a winter foraging site.

TRAIL MAP



Sanctuary Rules

Please help to protect our sanctuary by following these rules:

- Do not bike on the trails
- Leave the animals and plants as you found them.
- Absolutely no open fires
- Do not camp in the sanctuary
- Park only in the parking lot
- All motorized vehicles are prohibited
- Dogs must be on a leash
- No alcoholic beverages
- No hunting or firearms

Brookfield Conservation Commission

Telephone: 775-5242

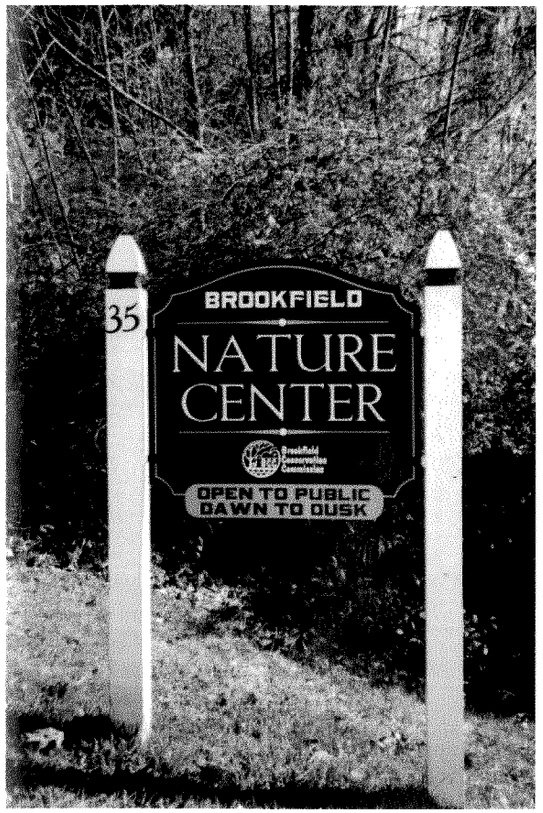
Our sincere thanks and grateful appreciation to those who have contributed to the development of the Brookfield Nature Center:

Iroquois Gas Transmission System
King's Mark Environmental Review Team
Environmental Land Solutions
Kathleen Johnson, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Paul Maniccia, Fairfield County Soil & Water Conservation District
G.E. Capital
Boy Scouts
Girl Scouts
The Garden Club of Brookfield
Lois Beardsley
William E. Schappert
Mac Dew & Sons

Brookfield Conservation Commission

THE BROOKFIELD NATURE CENTER

Brookfield, Connecticut



35 OBTUSE HILL RD. (ROUTE 133)
BROOKFIELD, CT 06804

The Landscape

The Brookfield Nature Center consists of 16 acres owned by the Town of Brookfield. The land has a striking mix of old fields, upland woods and stands of spruce mixed with large specimen trees of tulip and white oak. Merwin Brook cuts across the northwest corner of the property. The brook flows through a wooded wetland with white ash, elm and red maple trees around it. The grassland fields are nesting sites for bobolinks and other ground nesting birds. A careful mowing schedule is used to protect the eggs and chicks. Trails will lead you through the site. You will find numbered stations along the trail, which you can read about in this guide.