

Vinalhaven Land Trust

Founded in 1986, Vinalhaven Land Trust (VLT) offers over 15 miles of well-maintained trails on our preserves.

In 2011, we celebrated our 25th anniversary by gaining accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance; only the fourth land trust in Maine to be so recognized. In addition to our role as stewards of these properties we also offer educational programs and guided walks throughout the year. For more information, visit our kiosk to find maps, schedules of events, and detailed preserve brochures. It's located in Skoog Park, just 2/10 of a mile west of the ferry terminal along Sands Road. Feel free to enjoy our picnic table overlooking Sands Cove.

VLT's work relies on the generosity of our members. For more information on how to support our work, please contact us.

Skoog Park
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Vinalhaven Land Trust conserves and stewards our island's important natural, recreational, and agricultural resources, including scenic and other traditionally valued places, for the benefit and enjoyment of the entire Vinalhaven community. Through education and engagement, VLT seeks to advance understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

Watershed Preserve



History

This preserve comprises two parcels; the largest, donated to VLT by owner Jean Scudder in 2003, consists of roughly eighty acres of forested land. It was a stated condition of her gift that the land be conserved to protect the quality of Vinalhaven's water source, and virtually all of this piece lies within the watershed that supplies Vinalhaven's drinking water. The town's water main from the Folly Pond pumping station crosses the property.

In 2010, VLT purchased a nine-acre parcel with frontage on Otter Pond to "square off" the Scudder gift. These two parcels in turn are surrounded by other large blocks of conservation land owned by the Vinalhaven Water District and Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Collectively, the three organizations now protect several hundred contiguous acres around Folly and Round Ponds, helping ensure the quality of the town's water supply for generations to come.

Visitors can park in a gravel lot overlooking Folly Pond, and set off on a mile-long hike that takes you over old woods roads, then up onto a granite dome rising to 175' above sea level. From this high point, the trail then loops back down onto itself and returns. The walking is mostly level and easy while on the woods road, but becomes steeper and a bit more challenging as you climb and then descend from the summit of the dome.

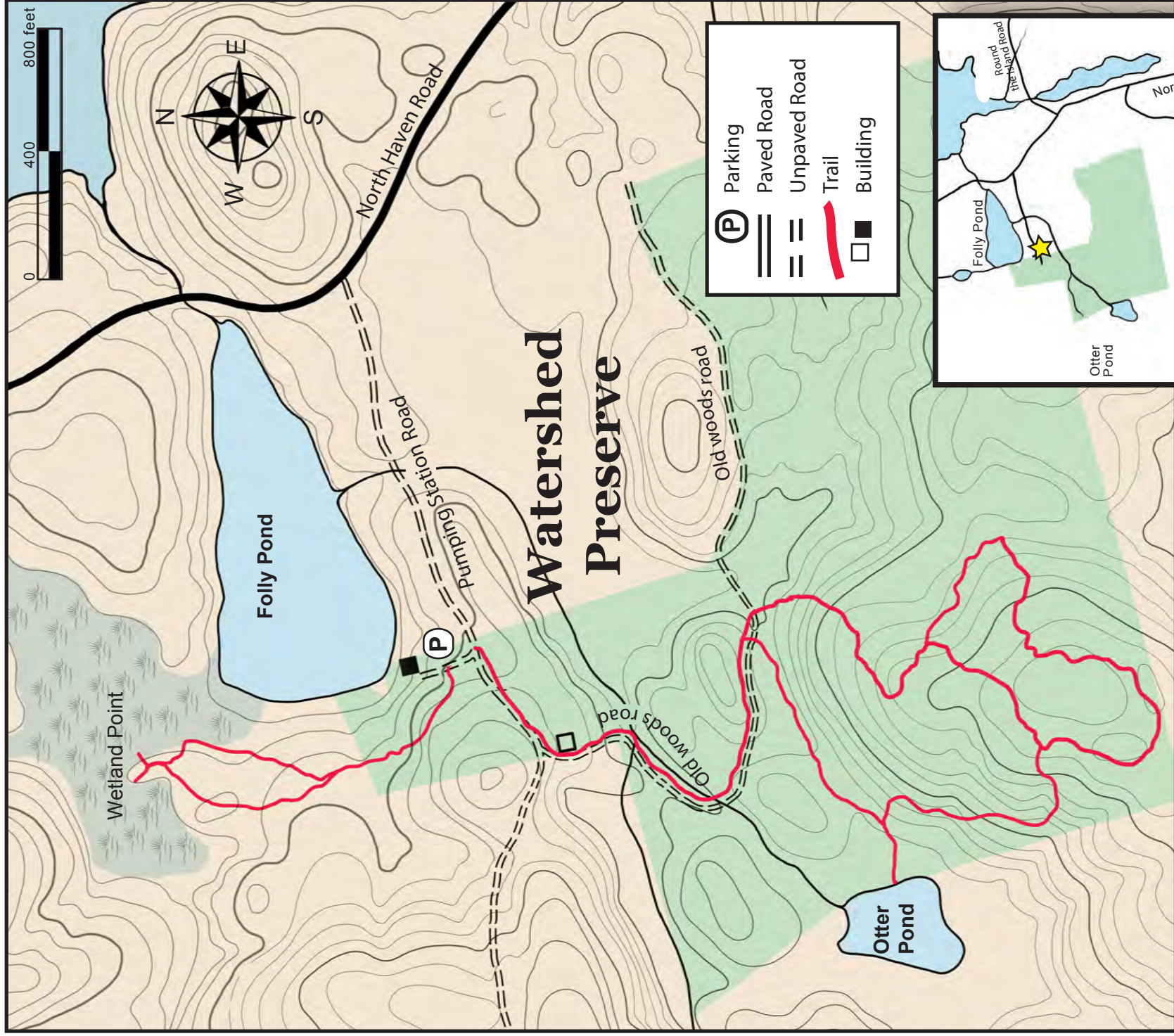
** Get digital VLT maps for your phone with the VLTapp from apple or google.

Natural Resources

Visitors to this preserve will see at least six different natural communities. Most of the area is low-lying terrain, which favors communities like Red Maple Alluvial Swamp and Spruce-Fir Cinnamon Fern Forest. The Wetland Point trail, added in 2020, offers panoramic views of more than fifteen acres of Leatherleaf Fen and Pickerelweed Bog. Assorted species of mosses form an important component of these communities, and serve double duty: they retain moisture in the forest floor, and they also filter impurities from surface water as it runs into Folly Pond.

As the ground rises slightly higher, the cover shifts to Maritime Spruce-Fir Forest, the plant community most commonly seen on Vinalhaven. Lastly, on the granite ledges of the preserve's highest land you will pass through an exemplary Pitch Pine Woodland, with fantastically-shaped gnarled pines emerging from seams in the granite ledges. Under the pines, low woody shrubs like huckleberry, juniper, sheep laurel, and crowberry share the scanty available topsoil and sprawl out over the bare ledges.

The ample sunshine and many openings of a pitch pine forest make it a rewarding place to watch for small birds and butterflies. Alternatively, the viewpoints along the Wetland Point trail offer great chances to see bald eagles, ospreys, waterfowl, flycatchers, dragonflies, and perhaps even something rare like a beaver or a spotted turtle.



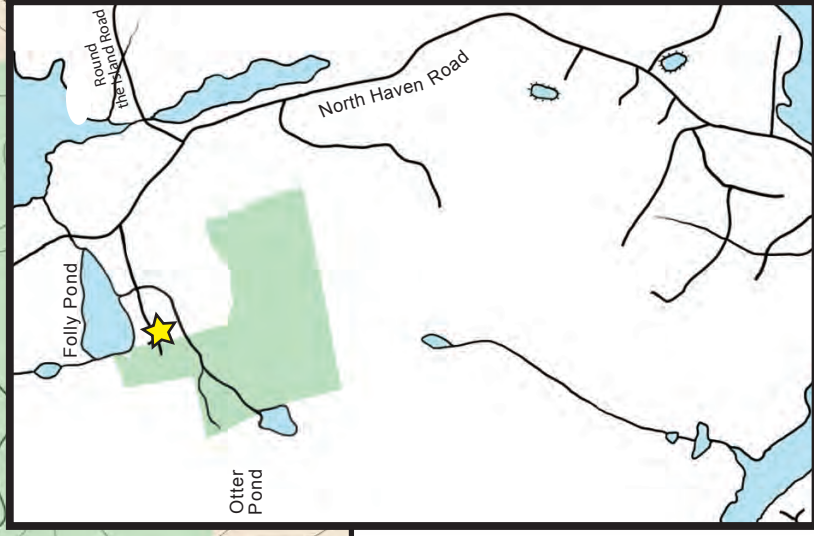
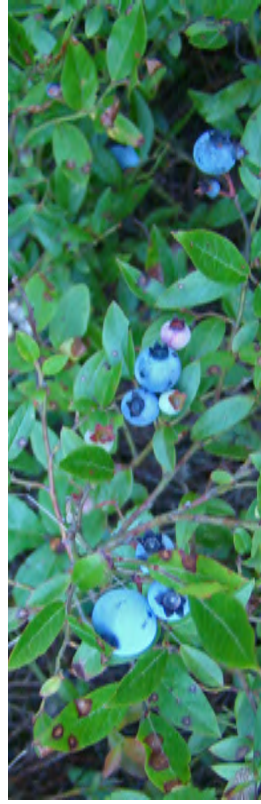
Updated 5/2022

Size: 89 acres

Trails: Several loops offer hiking options 0.5 to 1.5 miles. Wetland Point Trail out-and-back with a loop distance 0.7 mile

Features: Forested wetlands, pitch pine forest and panoramic view over 15 acre open wetland.

Be Aware: Some of the healthiest insect populations on the island are found here; many hikers will want to use repellents here from mid-May through early July. Because this preserve is surrounded by large tracts of forested land, people or pets who wander off-trail can easily lose their bearings.



Directions: From ferry, go left on Sands Rd. for 0.4 miles, then right on Old Harbor Rd. for 0.3 miles, then bear left onto North Haven Rd. for about 2 miles. The gravel road to Folly Pond will be on your left; the parking lot is about 0.3 miles in at the end of this road.