

THE PIKE-MARSHALL TRAIL

HISTORY- The *Hugh A. Marshall Preserve* consists of 112 acres donated by Dr. David Marshall to the Nature Conservancy in 1976. The *Pike Preserve* consists of 158 acres on both the east and west sides of Pumpkin Hill Road donated to the Nature Conservancy by Mrs. H. H. Pike in 1969. These properties along with the town owned Burton property to the north provide a contiguous north-south corridor between Gallup Hill Road and Lambtown Road.

TOPOGRAPHY- The area is underlain by a belt of granite gneiss with a north-south fault. The very end of the fault is visible as a narrow ravine bounded by 20 - 30 foot shear walls at the trail head off Lambtown Road. Proceeding north from Lambtown Road glacial deposits are evidenced everywhere, sometimes as solitary boulders up to 10 feet in diameter. Numerous stone walls are the remaining evidence that this land was once farmland that has now converted to mostly mixed hard wood forest. The Marshall property is dominated by low swampy wetland that drains to the north into Lee and Williams Brooks and eventually to Long Island Sound via Whitford Brook and the Mystic River.

DIRECTIONS TO TRAIL HEAD- A small parking area is available on the north side of Lambtown Road where a Nature Conservancy sign should be visible. This section of Lambtown Road is between Colonel Ledyard Highway and Pumpkin Hill Road, both being accessible from Rt. 184. The trail head is approximately .25 miles from Pumpkin Hill and .5 miles from Colonel Ledyard highway.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION- From the parking area on Lambtown road the blazed trail proceeds north about 1/3 of a mile, first along the bottom of the ravine and then shortly proceeding to higher ground and finally to a trail intersection providing a choice of two trail options.

LOOP TRAIL- The left trail from the intersection goes west and then south along the top of the west side of the ravine and back to the parking area completing a 3/4 mile loop.

NORTH TRAIL- The right trail from the intersection continues another 1/2 mile. At about the 1/4 mark a spur

trail on the right leads shortly to a spring from which water was bottled and sold to turn-of-the-century farmers. The trail continues north crossing a brook with a foot bridge and then shortly after crossing the Nature Conservancy boundary. The trail stops abruptly at a wetland which is the end of the trail for the casual hiker. At this point return on the same trail 1/2 mile south to the trail intersection and return to the parking area using either portion of the loop trail described above.

A CHALLENGE- Those enjoying bush whacking and who are equipped with a compass and topographical map can proceed a 1/2 mile further north from the end of the NORTH TRAIL to link up with the BURTON TRAIL* which originates behind the high school. Go directly east approximately 100 feet, crossing back onto the Nature Conservancy property, to the stone wall. Follow this stone wall directly north as it skirts the very edge of the wetlands on the Marshall property. The wall ends in approximately 1/4 mile at which time you must proceed directly north another 1/4 mile to the marked trails on the Burton property using only a compass and the edge of the wetlands to guide you. An additional 1/2 mile hike north using the Burton trail brings you to the Ledyard High School parking lot or Gallup Hill Road.

SIDE TRAILS- There are many other trails to explore on this very large tract of land. Some of these trails are also blazed, some lead to nearby farms on Pumpkin Hill Road and are used for horse back riding, some are old farm roads and logging trails. Most of the side trails lead to or are on private property. Be a conscientious hiker and respect postings.

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP INFO:

Lambtown Road parking: N41° 24' 45", W 71° 59' 25"

North Trail terminus: N41° 25' 25", W 71° 59' 30"

Northern end of bushwhack : N41° 25' 52", W71° 59' 32"

*OTHER TRAIL INFO- Maps and descriptions are available for the following trails at the town hall and both town libraries: BURTON , WHITE HALL , NATHAN LESTER, AVERY PRESERVE, GLACIAL PARK, and KETTLE HOLE.

LEDYARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

PIKE-MARSHALL TRAIL MAP

