

The Weir Preserve, formerly the Weir-Leary-White Preserve, came into being in 1969 with a gift of 37 acres to the Nature Conservancy by Cora Weir Burlingham as a tribute to her father, J. Alden Weir, a noted American Impressionist painter. Weir once lived in the house at the corner of Pelham Lane and Nod Hill Road, and a number of his paintings depict the Wilton landscape of his era.

Since 1970, the Preserve has increased in size due to gifts made by the following individuals: Eugenia Slaughter in memory of George Leary; Geoffrey and Elizabeth Baker in memory of Ann White; Roger Geffen; Elsie French; Helen Littauer; and Charles M. Lokey. Weir Preserve abuts the 60 acre Weir Farm National Historic Site, Connecticut's only national park (see p.76).

The Weir Preserve has much to offer its visitors. Trails lead through open meadows, across rock ledges, past deep swamps, and through thick stands of mountain laurel. The trail system is approximately 3 miles long although shorter loops are possible for visitors with limited time.

The Preserve actually comprises three parcels which are connected by easement trails. Access to the southerly parcel can be gained from Turtleback Road.

The yellow trail from the Nod Hill Road entrance follows an old farm track which runs between two stone walls. At the juncture of the yellow and white trails is an entrance kiosk with a trail map. Trail maps are available in a box on the sign. The white trail heads north and leads the visitor first through a second growth forest dominated by black birch and white ash and then into two open fields.

In spring, watch for bluebirds which have been noted using the nesting boxes provided by the Preserve Stewardship Committee. After passing through the field, a rocky trail meets the yellow trail again, and one has a choice of trails to follow. The longer yellow trail rises and falls with the local topography passing through uplands and lowlands and crossing streams and stone fences in rapid succession.

Highlights along this trail are a beech grove and some good views of the deep swamp that lies to the west of the trail. It also passes through thickets of mountain laurel which can be especially beautiful during June when in flower. Keep an eye out for striped maple or moosewood, recognized by its striped green bark. More prevalent in the north country, in this location it is at the southern limit of its range.



Directions: From Wilton Center go north on Rte. 33 for 2 miles. Turn right on Nod Hill Road and travel 3.3 miles. The Preserve entrance is on the left.

Acreage: ±110

Parking: At Nod Hill Road entrance. Limited, along side of road.

Access: Nod Hill Road entrance, Pelham Lane, Teapot Hill Road, Turtleback Road.

Trails: Approximately 3 miles for hiking.

Ownership: The Nature Conservancy

