

Welcome to Sally Milligan Park



History of Sally Milligan

Sally Milligan Park was a gift to the citizens of Beverly from Hugh Taylor Birch, who gave the original 31 acres to the city in 1933. He intended the park to be a memorial to his mother, Sally Milligan Birch. Mr. Birch wanted the park to be a place where residents of Beverly, especially women and children, could go and enjoy and learn from nature. Mr. Birch summered for many years at the home of his son-in-law Frederic T. Bartlett on Boyles Street. He conveyed his instructions for the care of the park as follows:

“I am presenting a Deed of land for a park as a memorial to my beloved mother Sally Milligan Birch to be used and occupied as a park for the benefit and enjoyment especially of the women and children of Beverly without presenting to you any directions as to the use of same by the city and its inhabitants but wishing you to know that I have full faith and confidence that you will see to it constantly that the women and children frequenting the park will receive special care and protection from motor driving and other machinery which are liable to cause accidents or injuries. And that the beautiful trees, shrubs and flowers now growing upon and adjoining the lands of the park may be retained for the education and enjoyment of the growing children and others who visit the park and constantly renewed in the long time to come in a way to imitate nature as near as

In 1999, the City of Beverly purchased an additional abutting fifteen acres from the Santin family, with assistance from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Essex County Greenbelt Association. The City added again to Sally Milligan in 2002 with the purchase of the 37 acre former Hill Estate.

Natural Features

The Forest: Sally Milligan Park includes forests, a field, and several types of wetlands. The forest is relatively dry, second growth dominated by red oak and white pine. Look for the beautiful stands of mature white pine, some of which reach impressive sizes. The shrubs of the understory include huckleberries, blueberries, and sweet pepperbush. The forest floor is carpeted with wildflowers such as Canada mayflower, pink lady's slippers, partridgeberry, flowering wintergreen, and wild sarsaparilla. The wetlands within the forest include one certified vernal pool, which serves as a springtime breeding pool for spotted salamanders.

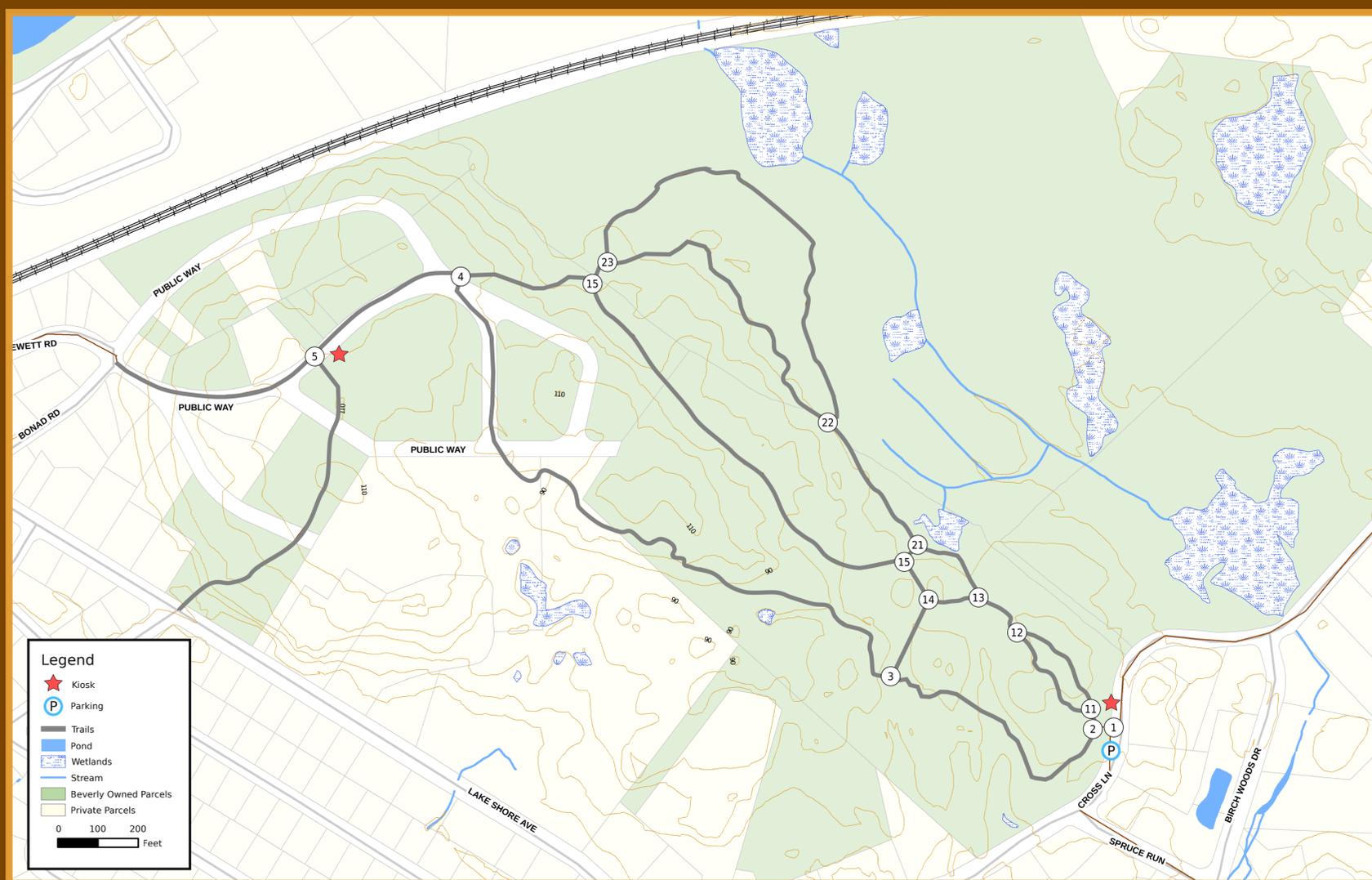
The forest harbors woodland birds that occur in eastern Massachusetts forests such as Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Tufted Titmouse, American Robin, Blue Jay, Red-eyed Vireo, and Pine Warbler. Listen for the whistled “pee o wee” of the Eastern Wood Pewee during the summer.

The Meadow: The sunny, grassy meadow and its adjacent thickets of shrubs at Sally Milligan Park contrast strongly with the forest. They provide habitat for a different assortment of birds: Song Sparrows, American goldfinches, Eastern Towhee, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, and Red-tailed Hawk. Look for the hawks perched on the power lines where they constantly scan the meadow for the small mammals upon which they feed. Goldenrods and asters provide a palette of bright colors in late summer.

A cattail marsh beyond the meadow is hard to explore, but you can often hear the banjo-like “gunk” call of Green Frogs and catch glimpses of the boldly marked Red-winged Blackbird when walking nearby.

Acknowledgements

The 2019 Kiosk and Wayfinding Sign Update Project was generously funded by a grant from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Recreational Trails Program in collaboration with the City of Beverly and Open Space and Recreation Committee volunteers.



Opossum



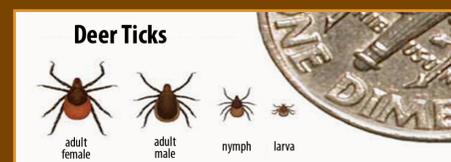
Starflower



Siberian squill



Wood frog



WARNING

Deer ticks, which can carry Lyme Disease, are found in this preserve. Take precautions to minimize contact: stay on trails and perform a full-body tick check at the end of your walk. Also check your children and pets.