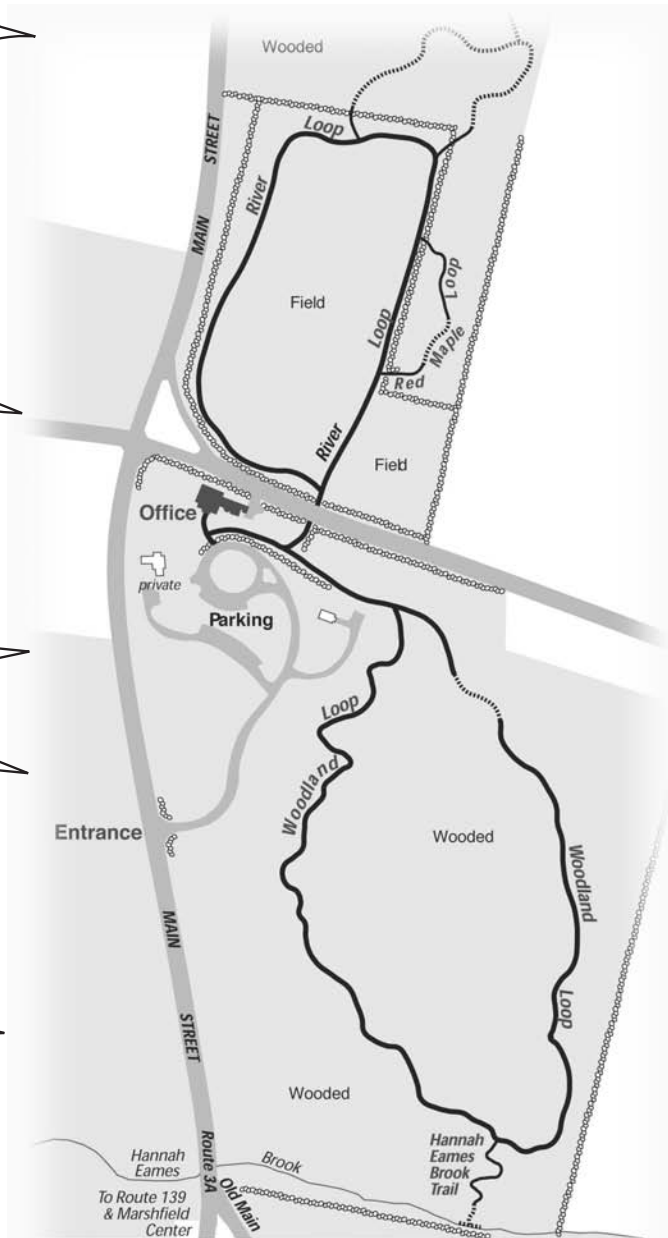


Mass Audubon Quests

North River Quest

Marshfield



Welcome to the North River Quest,
There are some special places,
We want to keep as our own,
Secrets hidden deep in the woods,
Where we watch nature grow.

Hannah Eames had a special place,
A spot that only she knew;
She's still there in spirit today,
And wants to share her secret with you.



Date _____

Starting Point

The entrance to the Woodland Loop trail.

Just who was Hannah Eames,
And what was her favorite place?
Looks like we have some sleuthing to do,
And that we have a path to trace.

Somewhere deep inside these woods,
A brook goes babbling along;
Today it carries Hannah's name,
Singing Hannah's song.

We walk into the forest,
Passing a closed trail on our right;
We come to a fork in the trail,
Both ends of the Forest Loop in sight.

It's time to make a decision,
Are we going right or heading straight?
What will we miss by choosing one,
Will it forever alter our fate?

But Hannah calls in the distance,
And helps us choose our way;
It's a loop after all, she says,
You can do both in one day!

We head down the straight path,
And come to a miraculous scene,
One big tree with six large shoots
Just what was nature's scheme?

But nature had little to do with it,
Save for letting the tree grow;
'Twas man that made this oddity,
To the best that we know.

This tree was cut down once,
Most likely for the shipbuilder's needs,
To become a mast or a spar
Or to fulfill some other needs.

But the stump never died,
And numerous shoots reached for the sky,
Only these six strongest survived
To become what we now see.

When Hannah Eames knew this tree,
All those centuries in the past,
It was a sapling fighting for the sun,
Not knowing how long it would last.

We come next to a boardwalk
That raises up off the ground,
It's really important in the springtime,
When there's so much rainwater around.

Continuing down the trail,
We see some weathered plywood lying still,
It would seem to be out of place,
But no – lift it gently if you will.

There's a whole new world underneath,
One of bugs and amphibians, too,
Red-backed salamanders live here,
And they could use some help from you.

We monitor their populations,
Under coverboards the sanctuary through;
We are looking for volunteers,
Who want to count them, too.*

The trail twists and turns,
Over roots and stones and more,
Sometimes it's better to look down,
To keep your eyes on the forest floor.

From time to time, a tree stands out,
A pleasure to our eyes;
We find a bench and sit down quietly,
To gaze upon another surprise.

A large beech tree stands surrounded
By youngsters of its same kind,
But Big Ol' Beech has a monopoly
On what's needed from the sky.

His bark is unlike any other,
All smooth and gray,
That's because he's not from here,
He comes from the equator way.

Trees up here in the north
Need to absorb all the heat they can get;
They form grooves in their bark,
And absorb from sunrise to sunset.

Trees at the equator,
Where the sun is hot all year long,
Reflect the sun and its heat,
And still remain strong.

But as hardy as he is,
Adapting to our clime,
Big Ol' Beech is dying,
Losing his fight against time.

Mushrooms grow on his trunk,
Taking from his water supply;
Some day soon he'll be gone,
And one of his youngsters will fly high.

We leave Big Ol' Beech,
To enjoy his fleeting days,
And head on down the trail,
To see where Hannah plays.

We find another beech,
And with it a curious thing,
A tree without any bark,
That looks just like a spring.

The Germans have a word for it,
For the twisting of a tree,
"Krumholz" they say,**
Which makes no sense to me.

But what it means, in English,
Has to do with the spin;
Every tree spirals out of the ground,
No matter how thick or how thin.

It's easiest to see after a storm,
When lightning strikes the tree;
The bark strips off in a twisted way,
Baring the "krumholz" for all to see.

We find a pine, on a mound of its own,
And we think we hear Hannah's brook;
We bounce down the trail to find our friend,
Enjoying all of nature as we look.

We enter a grove of bent over trees,
Some of nature's best;
These trees are called "Witch Hazel,"
But that's another quest.

We find a sign telling us
That Hannah indeed is near;
We take a left and follow the sound,
Of water flowing like tears.

This path is a great place
For mushrooms in the fall;
They poke out of the ground,
Surprising one and all.

A little stone wall here,
Was not here in Hannah's day,
Instead, it was built by an Eagle Scout,
An addition to the trail he laid.

We reach a small boardwalk,
And up onto it we go;
We reach the very end,
And now what Hannah knew, you know.

This brook rumbles through the woods,
Light in summer, heavy in spring,
Carrying water from Marshfield Hills,
As the chickadees and titmice sing.

It's a place of solitude,
It's a place of peace,
It's a place of reflection,
It's a place for Hannah Eames' dreams.

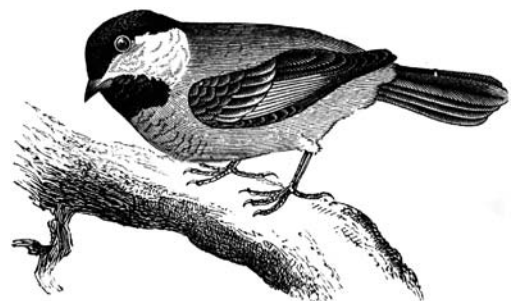
To find the treasure of Hannah Eames,
Backtrack your way down the trail;
Look under a stone, behind a tree to your left,
And you'll find it without fail.

Hannah Eames has passed on,
Living long before you and me,
But nature just keeps marching on,
Through a brook that rolls on timelessly.

* Mass Audubon is running a coverboard project this year to assess red-backed salamander populations. If you'd like to get involved, ask at the front desk.

** "Krumholz" means "bent wood."

There will be a North River Wildlife Sanctuary fact sheet in the container. If they are gone by the time you finish the quest, ask for one at the North River Wildlife Sanctuary.



North River Wildlife Sanctuary

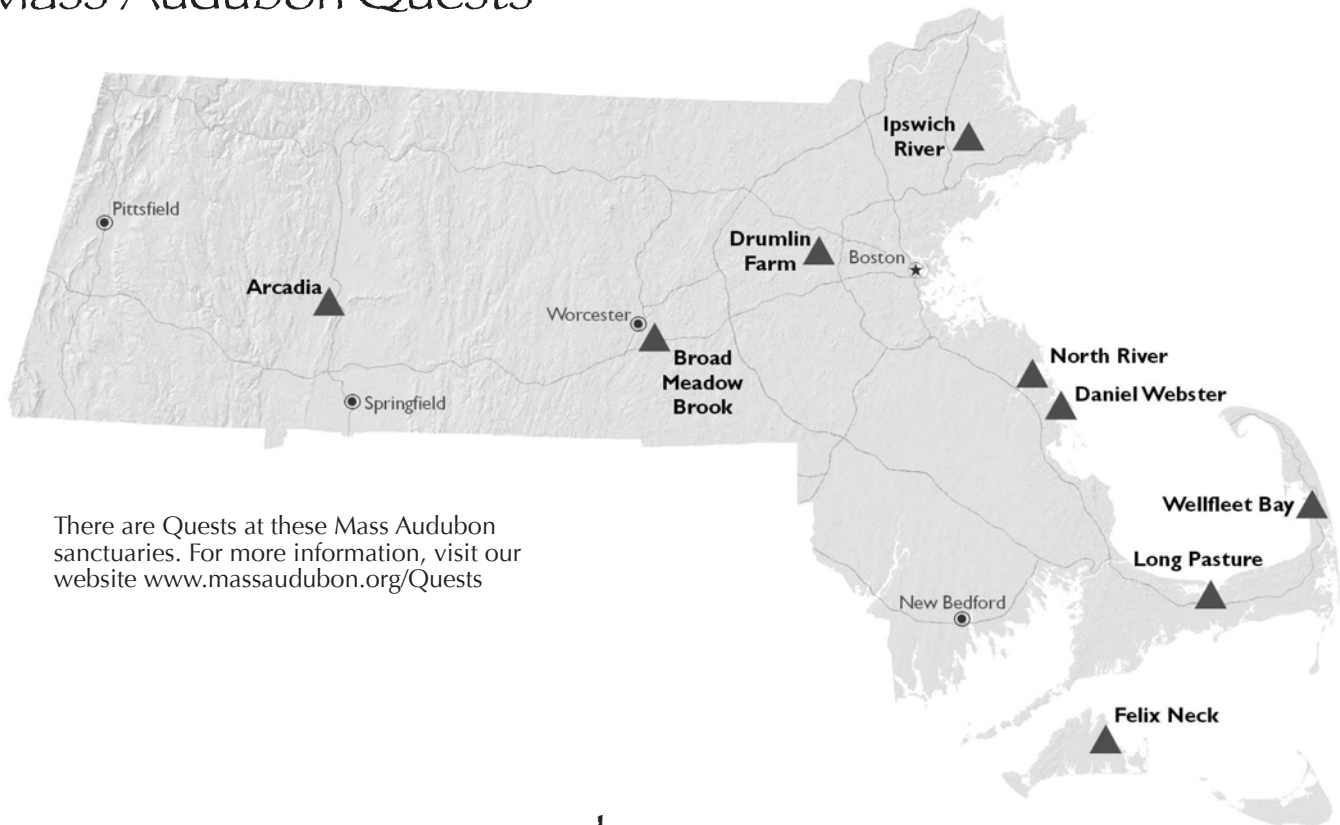
2000 Main Street
Marshfield, MA 02050
phone: 781-837-9400
email: southshore@massaudubon.org

Nature Center Hours:
Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 5pm
Saturday, call ahead - Closed Sunday

Trail Hours:
Open every day, dawn to dusk

The North River Wildlife Sanctuary is a place of many habitats, with the Hannah Eames Brook being one of the most peaceful and beautiful attributes of all. Most visitors think of the large cultural grassland and its access to the North River as the primary habitat, and well they should. But the Woodland Loop, with its red maples, oaks, beech trees and white pines, its hollies, high bush blueberries, club mosses, with hazels and more, is a world apart from the uniform waving grasses of the field. In spring and summer it's chickadees, titmice, three species of woodpeckers, phoebes and other forest species that dominate the surroundings. One can understand why Hannah Eames, wandering these woods back in the 17th century, would find delight in the trickling brook that now bears her name, meandering its way through the Marshfield Hills out toward Lewis Pond and eventually the sea.

Mass Audubon Quests



There are Quests at these Mass Audubon sanctuaries. For more information, visit our website www.massaudubon.org/Quests

Mass Audubon works to protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife. Together with more than 100,000 members, we care for 33,000 acres of conservation land, provide educational programs for 200,000 children and adults annually, and advocate for sound environmental policies at the local, state, and federal levels. Mass Audubon's mission and actions have expanded since our beginning in 1896 when our founders set out to stop the slaughter of birds for use on women's fashions. Today we are the largest conservation organization in New England. Our statewide network of 48 wildlife sanctuaries welcomes visitors of all ages and serves as the base for our conservation, education, and advocacy work. To support these important efforts, call 800-AUDUBON (283-8266) or visit www.massaudubon.org.



About Questing

Questing was born out of a 150-year old tradition in the region surrounding Dartmoor National Park in southwest England. "Letterboxing," as this tradition is called, is a popular past time, with thousands of boxes hidden in both natural and cultural locations. Vital Communities, a regional non-profit organization based in Vermont, built on this tradition in the United States by developing the Valley Quest program. In the early 1990s, Vital Communities was concerned about the future of the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont, and was hoping to develop a program that would foster sense of place, strengthen relationships between schools and communities, and build bridges across the generations. The result was Valley Quest, with "Valley" referring to the place and "Quest" referring to a treasure hunt—made by children and adults working together—leading to the community's special places. Over time, the Valley Quest program has grown. More than 2,000 children, adults, families, scouts, students and historical society members have contributed to the creation of the 200+ Quests found in the Valley Quest books; and communities across the country are beginning to replicate Valley Quest's success.

Quest is a trade name of the Valley Quest program, and is used with permission. For more information, visit www.valleyquest.org